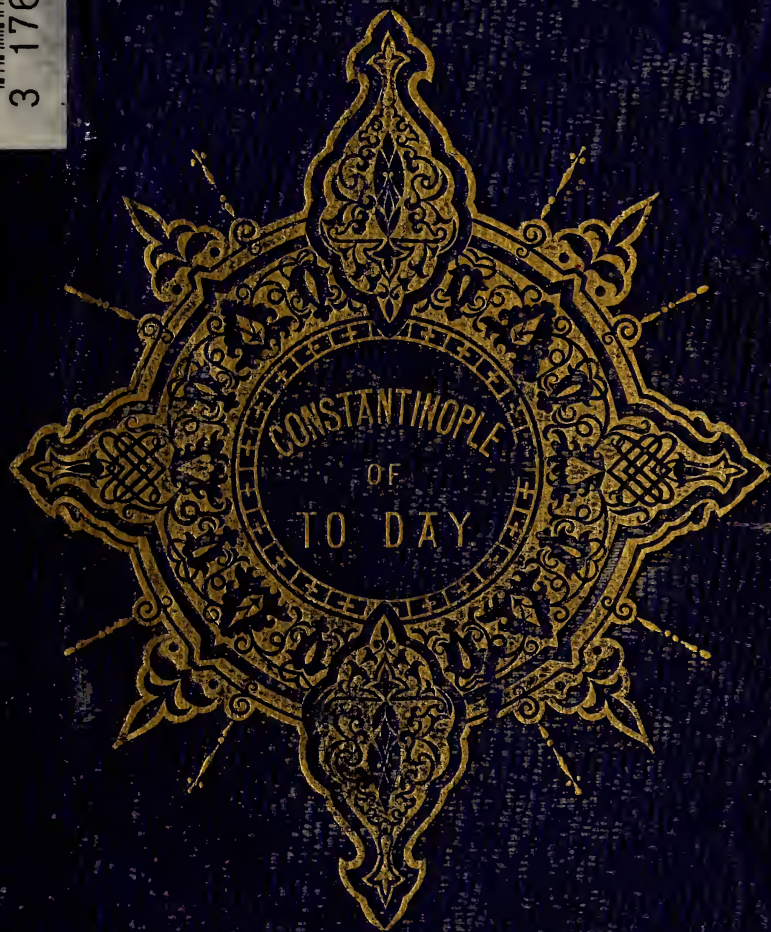


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Manuscript



NEW PALACE OF THE SULTAN ON THE BOSPHORUS.

W. H. Smith
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CONSTANTINOPLE
OF TO-DAY. *H. Murphy*



FOUNTAIN OF SULTAN SELIM.

BY THÉOPHILE GAUTIER.

LONDON: DAVID BOGUE, 86, FLEET STREET.

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CONSTANTINOPLE

OF

TO-DAY.

BY THÉOPHILE GAUTIER.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH,

BY ROBERT HOWE GOULD, Esq., M.A.

ILLUSTRATED WITH ENGRAVINGS FROM PHOTOGRAPHIC PICTURES.

MICROFORMED BY
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PREFACE.

It is with travellers as with artists :—Many artists may paint the same landscape, and paint it with fidelity ; yet no two shall present it in the same light, or from the same point of view. Each will portray it in his own way ; but still, if among the whole number, there lurk the eye and the hand of the master, they will display themselves. He will show the landscape in its happiest light, and under its most effective aspect.

Thus, in those descriptions of scenes and adventures, which make up a “book of travels,” no two writers will treat the same subject alike ; and, on the other hand, however familiar the subject, the man of genius will throw a fresh light upon it, bring out points before undetected, and give, in fact, the master-touch to that which, in other hands, had been tame and lifeless.

Among French writers of travels, Théophile Gautier holds the highest rank ; and much as has been written about Turkey, his work will still be found replete with interest, with originality of thought, force of description, and elegance of language.

One peculiarity, however, which will early impress the reader, is, the pre-eminently pictorial nature of his style. He writes, as it were, with the pencil of a painter; and dips his pen in the colours of the palette, rather than in the sombre and monotonous depths of the ink-stand. Perhaps no writer ever wrote, to whose eye everything, animate and inanimate, so promptly resolved itself into colour and form, and was, in that view, so rapidly and skilfully transferred to the paper. But powerful as this faculty is with Gautier, it is, perhaps, indulged almost to excess; for he not only *paints* man and beast, rock and river, mountain and sea, sky and cloud, but almost reduces human intellect and emotion to the same mode of illustration, and gives colour and outline to thought and feeling.

I venture to offer these observations, because they are preliminary to a few words, declaratory of the great difficulty, attendant upon the task of *properly* translating a writer whose peculiarities of style are so marked as those of Gautier. That style is purely and pre-eminently Gallic; and those peculiarities adapt themselves to the idioms and phraseology of the French language, with a nicety, which renders them only the more difficult to render effectively into English.

I have not, therefore, attempted a *verbal* translation, nor adhered slavishly to the exact phraseology of the original. Should any one do me the honour to read this book, who also knows it in the French, he will find that I have, at least, attempted to do *better* than give the bare

words of the author ;—that I have sought to transfuse his spirit and meaning into the English version ; and instead of adhering to mere phrases, which the difference in the genius of the two languages would rob of half their force, have sought to say in English what the author *would* have said, had he written in that language, instead of in the tongue which he, better even than most Frenchmen, knows how to render at once forcible and elegant.

The result of my efforts I leave to the indulgence of the public, with the consciousness of having done my best to deserve their approval, and the satisfaction of knowing, at least, that the work itself has merits, which even an inferior translation cannot altogether conceal.

THE TRANSLATOR.

THE Engravings that illustrate this Volume, have been copied from Photographic Pictures by Robertson, kindly lent for this purpose by the Proprietors of the Photographic Institution, 168, New Bond Street.

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CONSTANTINOPLE.

I.

AT SEA.

“WHO has drunken, will drink ;”—so the proverb assures us—and it is easy to modify the formula, and say, with certainly no less truth, “Who has travelled, will travel.”

The thirst of sight-seeing, like natural thirst, is often augmented rather than quenched by indulgence.

Thus, behold me at Constantinople, and already I dream of Egypt, of Cairo, of Spain, Italy, Africa, England, Belgium, Holland, a part of Germany, Switzerland, and the Greek Isles, and certain ports on the Asiatic coast ; my visits to which, at various epochs, and with divers renewals, have simply augmented this thirst for world-wide vagabondage.

Travel is a dangerous element to introduce into our course of life, for it disturbs it profoundly, and creates an habitual impatience of inaction ; and, in the case of a projected journey accidentally delayed, a restlessness, comparable only to that exhibited by birds of passage, made prisoners at the moment of migration.

He who proposes to travel, well knows that he is about to expose himself to fatigue, to privations, to annoyances ;

may, even to dangers; that he must forego his cherished habits, and the accustomed interchange of thought and affection; he must abandon his family, his friends, his relatives, and all the sweet intimacies of home, for the distant and the unknown; and yet, one feels it impossible to pause, or to resist this restless instinct; and even those who love you, seek not to prevent your journey, but silently clasp your hand from the step of the carriage.

And truly, is it not right to traverse somewhat the surface of this planet, upon which we, in turn, are traversing immensity, until the mysterious Author shall transport us to some new world, there to peruse another page of the Eternal Volume? Is it not a culpable indolence, to be always spelling the same word without ever turning the leaf? What poet would be content with a reader, who should peruse but one of his stanzas? Thus, every year, instead of nailing myself, by an assumed necessity, to one spot, I read a page, a country of this vast Universe, which seems less vast and immeasurable as I go over it; and, as it disengages itself from the vague cosmographies of the imagination, takes more definite force and localisation. Without going actually to the Holy Sepulchre, to St. James of Compostella, or to Mecca, I make, nevertheless, a pious pilgrimage to those spots of Earth, where the beauty of the scene renders God most visible. This time, I shall behold Turkey and Greece, and snatch a glimpse of that hellenic Asia, where beauty of outline and form is gilded by the surpassing splendours of the Sun of the Orient. But let us close this short preface—the shortest are ever the best—and put ourselves *en route* without more delay.

If I were a Chinese or an Indian, arriving from Nankin or Calcutta, I should describe to you with care and pro-

lixity the road from Paris to Marseilles; the railway of Châlons, the Sâone, the Rhône, and Avignon. But you know them as well as I do; and besides, really to travel in a country, it is necessary to be a stranger—the comparison of differences produces remarks. Which of us Frenchmen would observe, that, in France, a gentleman gives his arm to a lady? And yet, this is a peculiarity which would strangely “astonish the natives” in the Celestial Empire. Scarcely less, indeed, than would the Chinese mode of salutation—where two gentlemen, at meeting, “rub noses” together—amaze the passengers in one of our crowded streets!

Suppose, then, without going through the process of transition, that I am on the quay, and that the *Leonidas* has her steam up for Constantinople. The South declares itself already, by a bright sunshine, which warms the flag-stones, or sets a-chirping the hundreds of exotic birds, in the cages which hang in front of the stalls or shops of the numerous bird-fanciers. These little people flap their wings, and gaily give forth their choicest melodies, deluded by the warmth into a belief that they are at home again. Multitudes of little monkeys are also capering about their cages, or pausing to scratch their hairy sides, with a certain grotesque gravity; regarding you, meanwhile, with their almost human eyes, or offering you, amicably, their little cold hands, through the bars of their habitations; careless as yet of that consumption, which will by-and-by make them cough and wheeze in beds of wadding, among the wintry *salons* of Paris. Only the frigid turtles seem insensible to the vivifying rays of this summer-like sun.

In less than forty-eight hours, I have passed from pouring rain, and leaden skies, to a blazing noontide, and a sky of stainless azure. I have left winter behind me,

and found summer, ardent and glowing. I am about to take an ice; an idea which would have congealed me the day before yesterday, on the Boulevard de Gand.

I enter the "Café Turc." I owe it to myself, to give preference to the Turkish café, because I am bound for Constantinople. By my faith, it is a superb café! But at present, I will not talk to you about it as such; despite its profuse magnificence of mirrors, of gilding, of colonnades, multiplied by reflection, and arcades rendered interminable by the same optical delusion; or of that one exquisite saloon, which, decorated with pictures exclusively Marseillaise, forms a sort of local museum, at once curious and interesting.

Some of my readers may have encountered the droll remarks made by M. Méry upon Marseilles, and the melancholy look of the fountains, which endeavoured, by the mere power of architecture, to hide the awkward fact, that they were not supplied with water. At present, however, the water-works being completed, every villa about Marseilles prides itself upon a basin and a fountain; and there are those, who push the matter to the fatuity of a water-fall! Marseilles will soon be encircled with a crowd of Versailles, Saint Clouds, and Marlys, in miniature; and before long, I greatly fear that these superb plains, calcined by sunlight, these noble rocks of rich brown, will be covered with vegetation by dint of irrigation; and that masses of "green spinach,"—that delight of proprietors, and terror of landscape painters—will supply the place of this glowing and sparkling aridity.

But, come on! The anchor is up; the paddles strike the water. Behold us going out of the harbour. We pass the shores, escarped, barren, and naked, like those of the other coast of the Mediterranean. I know not if it has been remarked, but Marseilles and its environs are much

more "southern" in their character, than their latitude would seem to warrant. You have there African aspects, rough and warm as those of Algiers itself; and the physiognomy of the South displays itself in an emphatic manner. Many countries, situated five or six hundred miles farther south, have an air much more northern. This line of craggy and broken rocks, of which the base plunges into a sea of the deepest blue, opens occasionally, and gives a glimpse of the distant town surrounded by its villas, which dot the landscape with a thousand spots of purest white, and render the whole aspect tropical.

As we proceed, we meet here and there a few ships with swelling sails, making towards the harbour, which they hope to reach before nightfall; these lose themselves in the receding distance, and solitude begins to be felt. The shores disappear, the large waves begin to heave beneath the ship; and all around, there is to be seen only the sea and the sky. Some light crests of fleecy foam, known in French as *moutons* (sheep), float at intervals upon the blue pasturage of the waters. An ancient poet would have seen in these marine "sheep," the herds of Proteus. The sun, unaccompanied by a single cloud, plunges in the west like a ball of fire, and appears to smoke as it sinks in the water. The night comes—a moonless night—a salt dew falls upon the deck, and penetrates one's clothing with its acrid humidity. Cigars fall slowly in ashes, smoked by lips where nausea threatens to declare itself at the first plunge which the vessel may give a little too severely or inconsiderately. The passengers go below, one by one, and accommodate themselves as they best can, in the chests of drawers which serve them for beds. Although rocked by the waves, more regularly than ever was infant by its nurse, you do not necessarily sleep the better for it; and you dream the

most extravagant dreams, broken into fragments by the perpetually-recurring sound of the bell, which strikes the hours and marks the quarters for the crew.

With the first glimpse of dawn I am astir. Nothing still to be seen but the circle of two or three leagues, of which the vessel is the centre, that moves as she moves ; and which, by a stale conventionality, we are accustomed to style the “immense expanse of ocean,” and the type of the Infinite ; although I do not well know why, for the horizon which we grasp from the height of the smallest tower, or the most insignificant mountain, is by far the more vast.

The day breaks fully, and on the left the captain indicates land, which he says is Corsica. I can see, although with a glass, only a light mist, with difficulty distinguishable from the pale tints of the morning sky. But the captain was right. The vessel proceeds ; the gray vapour condenses itself ; it closes up ; the undulations of mountains become perceptible ; certain points grow clearer ; touches of yellow mark the naked escarpements ; masses of black indicate the forests and the spots darkened by vegetation. To the north, near that point, should be the Isola-Rossa ; farther on that mass of chalky whiteness is Ajaccio. But the ship is sailing at too great a distance from the island (which vexes me much), to permit me to discern anything in detail. We coast thus, for the whole day, at distance, this Corsica, energetic and savage ; with manners poetically ferocious ; with eternal feuds ; but which “progress” will soon render similar in character to the environs of Paris, or any other locality most commonplace and familiar.

This would be the place in which to introduce a brilliant episode about Napoleon ; but I prefer to avoid this beaten track, and simply allow myself to remark, in passing, the singular influence which islands seem to have ex-

exercised over the career and destiny of this hero, already almost fabulous; and the legends and traditions respecting whom, we see formed under our own eyes, instead of deriving them from our ancestors,—as in the case of heroes of whom they in turn were contemporaries. An island gave birth to Napoleon;—arrested in his career, he seeks shelter in an island, and from that island returns again to shake the world with the thunder of his tread;—fallen, he is sent from an island, to die on an island, killed by an island power. He issues from the sea, to begin his course; and that course fulfilled, sinks again in the ocean. What myth may not the future found upon these curious coincidences, when ephemeral history shall have disappeared, and given place to immortal poetry!

But just now, we see the “seven monks;” being seven peaks of rock, having the appearance of capuchins hooded and ranged in file; and now we approach the narrow strait which separates Corsica from Sardinia, on the side of Bonifaccio.

“Grèce qu’on connaît trop; Sardaigne qu’on ignore.”

A very narrow channel divides these two islands; which plainly have formed but one, before the action of floods and volcanic convulsions tore them asunder. It is easy to see distinctly the shore of each country, as you pass; you see on both sides hills boldly escarped and almost mountainous in elevation, but without grandeur; some occasional houses with yellow walls and tiled roofs sprinkling the shore, which without this would resemble that of a deserted island—for there is no trace of culture—and two or three vessels with lateen sails, sailing like sea-mews from one coast to the other.

On the Sardinian coast, some one points out the principal curiosity of the locality; namely, a singular aggre-

gation of rocks, on the summit of a hill, forming with remarkably exactitude, by their angles and their sinuosities, the shape of a gigantic polar-bear. It is easy to see, without any forcing of the imagination, the back, the legs, and the elongated head of the animal. The bearing, the attitude, the colour, are all there. As the beholder approaches, the outlines fade; the shape becomes confused or altered, the "bear" is re-transformed into rock; and the passage is left free from its terrible guardian.

The voyager follows at length the coast of Sardinia which faces Italy, as during the day he had traversed the coast of Corsica which faces France. Unfortunately night comes, and we are deprived of this view. Sardinia passes near us like a dream in shadow. I know nothing in the world more provoking, than to pass, in the night, a place which you have long wished to see. These misadventures occur frequently, now that the traveller is but the accessory of the voyage, and a man is intrusted, like a bale of merchandise, to the vehicle of transport.

On waking after another night, the broad sea appears of a blue so deep, that the sky itself seems pale by comparison. Some porpoises frolicking in the wake of the ship, swim with a rapidity which out-speeds the steamer and seems to defy her. They chase each other, tumble one over the other, and dash about beneath our bows. Then they drop lazily astern, and disappear after a few farewell tumbles and plunges. On the left of the vessel, at some distance, there appears an enormous fish, of a leaden colour, armed with a black dorsal fin, pointed like a spear. But he dives and appears no more; and these, with the appearance in the distance of three or four sails, pursuing their courses in different directions, form the sole events of the day. The weather is fresh; they hoist the mizen and the jib, which accelerate our speed by

some knots. In the evening we see Cape Maritimo, forming one of the points of that island which the ancients called Trinacria, an account of its form; and which is now *rather* more familiarly known, perhaps, as Sicily. Again, in the dark we pass the length of this ancient and picturesque coast; but to-morrow we shall be at Malta in the daylight.

At about two o'clock in the morning, I discern, under a band of striped clouds, a stratum somewhat more opaque than the rest: it is the island of Goza. Presently the *silhouette* cuts itself out more sharply. There are immense peaks of rock, at the foot of which the sea boils tumultuously, and which lift themselves from the bosom of the waters, like the summits of mountains immersed at their base; and it is said, that these vast white rocks can be distinguished for hundreds of feet beneath the blue transparence of the waters in which they bury themselves; a circumstance which produces an effect sufficiently startling to those who may happen, in frail vessels, to graze the face of these rocks, and have the power in some degree to estimate the depth of the abyss into which they are in danger of being plunged. From the front of these gigantic cliffs, rising like the walls of some mighty sea-side fortress, there hang fishermen, suspended by a rope, fastened around the waist (in the same way as the Italians suspend themselves to whitewash the fronts of houses), throwing their lines with perfect composure, and catching fish. The breaking of a rope, or an ill-constructed knot, would precipitate them to the depths of the fathomless gulf below!

We proceed. Undulations rather less precipitous, permit somewhat of cultivation. Low walls of stone, which from a distance resemble the lines traced upon a map, inclose and separate the fields. The clouds have

disappeared. A beautiful colour, warm and glowing, wraps the earth in a mantle of gold. A heap of white Spanish loaves, above which tower certain rounded domes, blazing under a blinding sun, rising to the height of a hill, or almost of a mountain;—that is Goza, the capital of the island. The curiosities of the locality are, some caverns, excavated on the verge of the sea, at the entrances of which whirl clouds of aquatic birds, who make their nests within; a cliff where springs a species of mushroom, much prized, and of which the knights of Malta have a monopoly; and the salt-pit of the clockmaker,—a strange hydraulic phenomenon, of which I append a brief explanation. A Maltese clockmaker, having conceived the idea of making some salt-pits on the coast of Zebug, where he possessed some lands near the sea, caused the rocks to be excavated, in order to retain and evaporate the salt water; but the sea having mined underneath, without his concurrence, began, at a certain stage of his works, to discharge itself upward through one of his wells, like a water-spout, or like one of the watery volcanos of Iceland, to the height of more than sixty feet, deluging all the neighbouring country. With great labour and difficulty, the mouth of this marine volcano was stopped; but still from time to time it makes a partial eruption. I did not see “the clockmaker’s salt-pit;” but this history of it was related to me as authentic.

Goza and Malta are situated, relatively, exactly like Corsica and Sardinia; a narrow strait divides them, and in former times they, also, must have formed but a single island. The aspect of the two coasts (Goza and Malta) is identical. There is an obvious continuation, from one to the other, of the same rocks, the same soil, and the same geological formation.

The climate in which we are travelling has changed

greatly since yesterday. The sky has taken a tint of ultra-marine. The burning wind of Africa begins to make itself felt. Malta produces oranges ; the fig and the aloe flourish there.

And now we begin to discern the fortifications of the city of La Valette ; made conspicuous by two windmills, in the form of towers, and with their wheels supplied with eight wings, instead of our accustomed four ; a form, however, common throughout the East ; but so striking that Hoguet, the Raphael of windmills, ought to make the journey expressly to paint them. So many wings, multiplied like the spokes of a wheel without fellies, have a peculiarly original physiognomy.—The blue water becomes green as we approach the land, and double Cape Dragut. The steamer makes a half-circuit, and enters the narrow mouth of the harbour, passing the castle of Saint Elmo and Fort Ricazoli.

The fortifications, with their precise angles and bold ridges, illumined by a brilliant light, are thrown up, almost geometrically, between the deep blue of the heavens and the dull green of the sea. The slightest details of the shore stand sharply out. To the left, arises an obelisk, to the memory of Colonel Cavendish, and beyond you see the extreme angle of the victorious city and the suburb of La Sangle ; to the right, La Valette presents itself, in form of an amphitheatre. The harbour, which bears the local name of the Marse, runs inland at two points, divided by a strip of land, like the head of the Red Sea. Ships of all nations—English, Sardinian, Neapolitan, Greek—are lying at anchor at various distances from the shore, waiting for a sufficient depth of water. Upon the quay, on the side of La Valette, the English soldiers are to be seen, in their scarlet coats, and immaculate white trousers ; and some wagons with enormous red wheels, recalling the ancient

curriculi of Naples. All this stands relieved against the white walls, with startling clearness. Although the situations are by no means the same, there is in this redundancy of fortifications, in the British type blended with the Southern, something which recalls Gibraltar; and this resemblance seems to strike all who have visited these two British possessions; these keys which open and shut the Mediterranean.

We are seen from the shore. A whole fleet of small boats rowed at full speed, bears down upon the steamer. We are surrounded, hemmed in, invaded! A pacific onslaught takes place, and we are boarded at all points. In a moment the deck is covered with a crowd, pushing, shouting, and elbowing; and uttering a jargon of all conceivable languages and dialects; till one might fancy himself at Babel, on the day of the dispersion of the workmen by the confusion of tongues. Before knowing to what nation you belong, these facetious polyglots "try" upon you English, Italian, French, Greek,—nay, even Turkish,—until they ascertain the tongue in which they can be understood. The couriers, the waiters from the hotels, pursue you, hunt you down,—nay, fairly assassinate you with offers of service. They stuff the cards of their respective hotels into your hands, your overcoat, your waistcoat, your trousers pockets—actually into your hat-band; the boatmen pull you about, right and left, by the arm, by the collar of the coat, or the skirt of the paletôt, at the risk of tearing you to pieces; a trifling circumstance, which they don't seem to care about! They quarrel about you, and fight over you, vociferating, gesticulating, stamping, behaving like men possessed,—but, in short, "as much killed as wounded," and there seem to be very few quite dead; so that, in fact, this scene of tumult, like Shakspeare's play, may be entitled, "Much ado about

Nothing." At length the "row" abates; the travellers are distributed into "lots," over each of which a boatman exercises an absolute right of property, and prepares to transfer it to his boat. To the boatmen and the *commissionaires* or waiters of the hotels, one must not forget that there are added a throng of vendors of cigars, who offer you packets enormously large, at prices diminutively small. (It is true, they are execrable.)

I remarked, among this motley crowd, some "types" eminently characteristic. Bronze faces, with long ringlets of glossy black hair, small mouths, and sparkling eyes (a type, in fact, almost African, upon the basis of a regularity of feature almost Grecian), presented themselves frequently, and appeared to be proper to the Maltese race. These heads, planted upon muscular throats and massive busts, which have apparently not yet been reproduced by the painter, would furnish novel and striking models. As to costume, nothing could be more simple:—linen trousers, tightened at the waist by a woollen cord, a full shirt, a red cap cocked over one ear, and neither shoes nor stockings.

While the passengers, in their haste to land, encumber the ladder, I take a look at the boats flocking around the ship's quarters, like small fish around a whale; and observe their peculiarities of construction and ornament. Destined to harbour duty only, where the water is ordinarily still, these boats have no helm; the bow and the stern are indicated by a raised bulwark, somewhat resembling the "beak" of a Venetian gondola, without that indented iron which looks like the handle of a violin. At the bow, are painted two staring eyes, as in the skiffs of Cadiz and Oporto; and beside these eyes, a hand, with the index finger extended, seems to point the way. Are these a symbol of vigilance, or a preservative against the *jettatura* and the

evil-eye? This is what I cannot precisely tell you; but these eyes, so placed, give to the boats a vague sort of resemblance to fish swimming above water, which is odd enough. On the bow are also painted the arms of England, with the lion and unicorn displayed in flaring colours; or perhaps a ferocious hussar making an impossible horse prance in an equally impossible manner,—a creation due to the fancy of some artistic house painter. Boats more modest, content themselves with the representation of a simple pot of flowers, singularly full-blown.

The crowd lessens; I get into a boat; I land, and pass under a dark gateway. A flight of steps, forming the entrance to a street, present themselves; I mount at a venture, according to a habit which I have, of walking about strange towns without a guide, following a certain topographical instinct, which rarely misleads me; and after a few zigzags I come out upon the Government Square, just at the hour when they are about to beat the “retreat” for the soldiers. This retreat merits a special description. I have no wish to cast ridicule upon the British army (even were it easy to do so), but this music is singularly comic in its manner of performance. The little drums, the big drum, and the fife, range themselves silently at one side of the square: at a sign from the drum-major, the drummers lift their sticks, and the fifer his fife, but with a movement so mechanical, and so strictly simultaneous, that it would seem to be produced by springs, rather than muscles. Eight white-trouser-legs rise and fall together with geometrical precision, and in a moment a savage tempest of discordancy breaks loose.

The big drum groans, like a bear in a passion; the little drums rattle fit to split themselves; and the fife, screwed up to an impossible pitch, screams out the most extravagant shrillnesses; but the performers, despite all

this fury of sounds which they are uttering, maintain none the less their wooden and immoveable aspect, inert, frozen ; upon which the south wind has not been able to melt the frost of the north. Arrived at the other end of the square, the musicians briskly retrace their steps, continuing to make the same uproar.—You have, doubtless, seen those German toys, worked by a crank, which pulls a wire, and causes a soldier to come out of a sentry-box, to the sound of a small squeaking pretence of music. The soldier advances in a groove, to the extreme end of the box, right-about-faces, and returns to his starting point. Enlarge and multiply this German toy, and you will have a most perfect idea of the performance which I witnessed. I could never have believed, that a man could be made so closely to resemble a figure of painted wood. It is a grand triumph of discipline !

Re-descending towards the sea, I observe the reflection of the light of a wax taper at the door of a church. I enter. Draperies of crimson damask, loupéd up with golden cords, envelop the pillars. Upon an altar, plated with silver, shine stars of gold filagree and false diamonds. A few lamps spread a mysterious twilight in the side chapels. Before a Madonna, enclosed by a grating, are suspended several *ex votes* in wax or in silver ; some stern pictures in the Spanish style are vaguely discernible in the dim light of the tapers. I seem to be in a church in Spain, in an unmixed atmosphere of sincere and fervent Catholicism.

Some boys, seated in rows upon wooden benches, chaunted in guttural tones a canticle, which was “toned” by an aged priest. I retired, more edified by the intention than by the music.

Night has fallen absolutely. Torches are burning at the corners of the streets, before the images of virgins

and saints. The shops of vendors of comestibles and refreshments are lighted by candles, which twinkle among the verdure of the vegetables, like glow-worms in the grass. Hooded females ascend and descend the stairs at the end of the streets, creeping mysteriously under the walls, like bats of the twilight of love.

I fancy that I hear the musical clash of the brass ornaments of a tambourine ; it is a practised hand beating *à la tambour* upon the body of a guitar. Am I at Malta, an English possession, or at Granada in Spain ? It is long since I have seen feet tripping to music in the open street ; and I begin to think, despite my two journeys in Spain, that such a thing was never seen, except in the frontispieces of novels or poems. But this has rejuvenated my heart many years, and I remount the deck of the *Leonidas*, humming with as little incorrectness as possible the inspiriting air to which I have just been listening.

To-morrow, I shall come again, to see in broad daylight what I have now dimly observed under shade of night ; and I shall endeavour to give you some idea of the city of La Valette ; that stronghold of the knights of the Order of St. John, who have played so bold and brilliant a part in history, but who have passed away, like all ancient institutions when they have no longer an object ; and of whom there now remains, only the memory of former glories.

II.

MALTA.

I HAVE found again, at Malta, that exquisite Spanish sky, of which Italy herself, with her so-much-vaunted heavens, offers but a weak and pale reflex. The atmosphere of Malta is really clear, and does not form one of those "twilights," more or less pale, which are dignified by the name of "daylight" in the climates of the north.

Again to-day, the boat lands us upon the quay, and I enter the city of La Valette by the Lascaris-gate, as it is named in the inscription visible above its entrance. This Grecian name, and this English word, soldered together by a hyphen, have a singular effect. All the history of Malta is, however, contained in those two words ; or rather in the manner in which they are blended into one phrase.

Under the arch of this gateway, in the passage, as in the Gate of Judgment at Grenada, there is a chapel dedicated to the Virgin ; at the extremity of which, trembles a taper behind a grating, before the image of the saint ; and the threshold of which is literally obstructed by mendicants, who for the picturesqueness of their rags, might vie with those of Albacino. The warm countries gild these beggars' rags, and colour them for the palette of the painter.

By this gate goes and comes a crowd, motley and cosmopolite. Tunisians, Arabs, Greeks, Turks, Smyrniotes, and Levantines of every shade, are there in their national

costumes ; without even counting the Maltese, the English, the French, and the other Europeans.

I remember one gigantic negro, wrapped, in default of all other clothing, in a blanket, which he folded majestically about him, while he escorted a young English-woman, whose dress was so correct and so English, that it would have borne the severest criticisms of the crowds of Hyde Park or Piccadilly. He had an air so composed, so safe in its self-confidence, that it was quite evident he would not have changed his primitive and scanty garment for the whole bran-new equipment of a dandy of the Boulevard de Gand !

The Orientals, even the inferior classes, have a surprising amount of natural dignity. Some Turks pass this gate, whose whole clothing would not command one penny, and who might, nevertheless, be taken for princes in disguise. This natural aristocracy of look and bearing, would seem to spring from their religion, which causes them to regard all other nations as dogs.

As we stand here, the large-wheeled red carts already mentioned are passing along, intermingled with vehicles of a singularly droll shape, having the wheels thrown far behind the body, and which recall in some degree the carriages of Louis XIV., as shown in the landscapes of Van der Meulen. I believe vehicles of this kind to be peculiar to Malta, for I certainly have never seen them elsewhere. Their circulation is, however, restricted to certain of the principal streets, the others being rendered impassable for carriages, by flights of steps, or precipitous descents.

Inside the Lascaris-gate, there is a market, singularly full of life and vivacity ; where, under tents and sheds, you see picturesquely exhibited ropes of onions, sacks of dried peas, heaps of tomatoes and cucumbers, baskets of red

fruit, and all sorts of vegetables, rich in local colouring, picturesquely displayed. A beautiful fountain, with a marble basin, surmounted by a gigantic bronze Neptune resting upon a trident, produces a singular but charming effect, amidst all these shops.

Among the cafés, the taverns, and the eating-houses, one meets here and there a regular English "public-house," placarded in true cockney style, with its "*Porter, simple and double; Old Scottish ale; East India pale beer; Gin, Whisky, Brandwine,*"¹ and other vitriolic mixtures, for the use of the subjects of Great Britain; which liquors contrast oddly enough with the lemonades, the cherry syrups, and the iced drinks which the sherbet merchants sell so rapidly.

The policemen, armed with a short staff, blazoned with the British arms, march with a measured step through this southern crowd, and enforce order. Doubtless, nothing can be more wise and expedient; but these men—grave, impassive, conventional in the fullest sense of the word, inflexible representatives of the law—have a strange effect, moving among this exotic throng, and between this bright sky and glowing earth. Their outline seems made expressly to define itself upon the fogs of High Holborn and of Temple Bar.

The city of Valetta, founded in 1566, by the grand-master whose name it bears, is the capital of Malta. The city of La Sangle, and the city of Victoria, which occupy two points of land on the other side of the harbour of the Marse, together with the suburbs of Floriana and Burmola, complete the town; encircled by bastions, ramparts, counterscarps, forts, and fortifications, to an extent which

¹ The author's idea of a literal transcript of the English spelling of these commodities is so very characteristic, that I could not forbear to copy it, precisely as he has given it in the original work.—TRANS.

renders siege impossible ! If you follow one of the streets which surround the town, at each step that you take, you find yourself face to face with a cannon. Gibraltar itself does not bristle more completely with mouths of fire. The inconvenience of these extended works, is, that they enclose a vast radius, and demand to defend them, in case of attack, an enormous garrison ; always difficult to maintain at a distance from the mother country.

From the height of the ramparts, one sees in the distance the blue and transparent sea, broken into ripples by the breeze, and dotted with snowy sails. The scarlet sentinels are on guard from point to point, and the heat of the sun is so fierce upon the glacis, that a cloth stretched upon a frame and turning upon a pivot at the top of a pole, forms a shade for the soldiers, who, without this precaution, must inevitably be roasted on their posts.

On mounting towards the second gate, you find a church in the same taste as those of Madrid ; but which offers nothing curious in the interior. This gate, which is reached by a drawbridge, is surmounted by a triumphal blazon of the English arms ; and the moat, transformed into a garden, is obstructed by a profusion of tropical vegetation, of a green absolutely metallic ; lemons, oranges, figs, myrtles, and cypresses, planted pell-mell, in bushy and charming disorder. Above the circle of fortifications, beyond the terraces of houses, you catch a glimpse of the blue sky, between white arcades which enclose the promenade of the Piazza Regina, situated at the summit of the town, and affording a view of surpassing magnificence.

The city of Valetta, although built with regularity, and, so to speak, all in one " block," is not, therefore, the less picturesque. The decided slope of the ground neutralises what the accurate lines of the streets might other-

wise have of monotony, and the town mounts by degrees and by terraces the hillside, which it forms into an amphitheatre. The houses, built very high like those of Cadiz, terminate in flat roofs that their inhabitants may the better enjoy the sea view. They are all of white Maltese stone; a sort of sandstone easy to work, and with which, at small expense, one can indulge various caprices of sculpture and ornamentation. These rectilinear houses stand well, and have an air of grandeur, which they owe to the absence of (visible) roofs, cornices, and attics. They stand out sharply and squarely against the azure of the heavens, which their dazzling whiteness renders only the more intense; but that which chiefly gives them a character of originality, is the projecting balcony hung upon each front, like the *moucharabys* of the East, or the *miradores* of Spain. These glazed cages, enriched with flowers and shrubs, and which resemble miniature conservatories projecting from the houses, are supported by consoles and brackets, carved and convoluted; decorated by battlements, by entwining foliage carved in stone, and by innumerable ornamental chimeras, achieved in fantasies the most various.

These balconies break gracefully the line of façades, and, seen from the end of a street, present the happiest outlines. The shadows thrown by their bold projections, cut appropriately the continuous brightness of the fronts. The tendrils of sweet peas, the red stars of geranium, and the brilliant flowers of other profuse plants, overhanging from the open lattices, enrich with their gay colours the blue and white, which form the general tone of the picture. It is in these balconies, that the ladies of the independent classes of Malta pass their lives, watching for the faintest whisper of the sea breeze, or listlessly yielding to the enervating influence of the sirocco. One

catches from the street a glimpse of a snowy arm resting upon the sill of the lattice, or a glance from the corner of a superb black eye, forming an agreeable interruption to all these architectural contemplations.

The Maltese women do what is rare with their sex, who generally govern their toilette more by fashion than by taste: they have the good sense to adhere to their national costume; at least, they do so in the streets. The distinctive feature of this costume, is a garment entitled a *faldetta*, consisting of a sort of mantle of a peculiar cut, and which is made to act also as a hood, by enlarging or contracting an opening, regulated by a little stick of whalebone, according as the wearer desires to let more or less of her features be seen.

The *faldetta* is uniformly black, like a domino, of which garment it possesses all the advantages, added to a grace refused to those shapeless sacks of satin which hover at carnival time about the crush-room of the opera. The wearer of the *faldetta* hides one cheek and one eye, on the side nearest the person by whom she does not wish to be seen, while the other eye flashes upon a person more favoured; or she can throw the *faldetta* back entirely, or raise it to hide all but the eyes, as circumstances or caprice may dictate. It is a masquerade transported into the open street. Under this mantle of black silk, is worn habitually a flowing dress of rose or lilac, which completes the costume.

So far as I could judge, when an occasional propitious breeze blew aside for an instant this mysterious veil, the Maltese women approach the oriental type, by their large Arabian eye, colourless complexion, and nose ordinarily aquiline. As I have seen no entire face, but only the eye of this, the nose of that, and the cheek of the other; and, thanks to the *faldetta*, not a single chin anywhere, except

at the windows, and fatally foreshortened to my upward gaze; I do not offer a definitive opinion on the subject, but give the result of my casual observation, for what it is worth.

The "Guides for Travellers," and the works upon geography, pretend that the Maltese women are coquettish in humour, and somewhat too susceptible in temperament. I am not a sufficiently transcendental Don Juan, to have assured myself personally of the verity of this assertion, during a sojourn of a few hours; but the houses have two or three ranges of balconies; the ladies wear invariably upon the head a garment, which is the equivalent of the ancient Venetian mask, and the modern Spanish mantilla; the sirocco blows for three days in every four; the thermometer usually indicates a temperature of about ninety degrees; they play on the guitar in the streets in the evening; and vespers are very generally attended. Moreover, one hardly expects to find puritanically frigid manners and morals, between Sicily and Africa.

This somewhat too great alleged ease of manners, is attributed always, in the above-cited philosophical works, to "the corrupt morals of the knights of Malta!"—although the poor knights thus rudely accused, have slept for these many years beneath their tombs of mosaic, in the church of St. John; and the fault, if fault there be, is chargeable solely upon the ardent sun of this glowing clime. All I can add is, that the ladies seemed to me singularly attractive thus dressed, and as it were popping their noses out of window, through the opening of the *faldetta*.

Wandering at random, I encounter charmingly picturesque corners of streets, which would delight the heart of an artist. The balconies round off the angles, and form successive ranges of galleries; while a Madonna or a Saint,

of life size, the head under a canopy of stone, and the feet upon an enormous pedestal, ornamented with carved shells and spiral flutings, presents itself abruptly to the adoration of the pious, and the pencils of the caricaturists. Large lanterns, suspended from gibbets of complicated construction, light up these religious images, and afford charming subjects for sketches. I certainly had not expected to find in English Malta, localities so thoroughly Catholic.

Beneath most of these statues are written inscriptions, similar to the following:—

“Monseigneur Fernando Mattei, Bishop of Malta (or his Excellency the Most Reverend Don Felix Saverio), bestows forty days of indulgence upon all those who will say a *Pater*, an *Ave*, and a *Gloria*, before the image of the Most Holy Virgin, or of Saint Francis Borgia, placed here by his commands.”

As I have alluded to the subject of sacred sculpture, I will mention a particular object which I remarked over the doorway of a church, consisting of a death's-head furnished with butterflies' wings. This hieroglyphic of the brevity of life, seemed to me to associate in a novel manner the emblems of the boudoir with the ornaments of the tomb. It were difficult to be more gallantly sepulchral, and the idea must have been cherished by some merry little abbé of the court. If the sense of this funereal riddle was clear to me, the same was not true of a small *bas-relief* which I saw over the doors of several houses, and which represented the nude figure of a woman, plunged in flames to the waist, and raising her arms towards heaven, while a scroll beneath bore the inscription *Valetta*. A Maltese, however, whom I consulted, informed me that the rents of these houses revert to the “Brotherhood of the souls in Purgatory,” at the death of the proprietors; for whom the brotherhood

are then bound to say prayers and masses. This female figure symbolises the soul.

The palace of the grand-masters—to-day the palace of the government—has nothing remarkable in the way of architecture. Its date is recent, and it responds but imperfectly to the idea one would form of the residence of Villiers de l'Île Adam, of Lavalette, and of their warlike successors. Nevertheless, it has a certain monumental air, and produces a fine effect upon this great Place, of which it forms one entire side. Two doorways, with rusticated columns, break the uniformity of the long façade; while an immense balcony, supported by gigantic sculptured brackets, encircles the building at the level of the first floor, and gives to the edifice the stamp of Malta. This detail, so strictly local in its character, relieves what might be heavy and flat in this architecture; and this palace, otherwise vulgar, becomes thus original. The interior, which I visited, presents a range of vast halls and galleries, decorated with pictures representing battles by sea and land, sieges, and combats between Turkish galleys and the galleys of the "*Religion*."¹ Many of these pictures are by Matteo da Lecce; and there are others by Trevisan, Spagnoletti, Guido, and Michael Angelo di Carravaggio.

The guide leads you through grand apartments, with floors covered with matting, with columns of stucco or marble, with tapestries after Martin de Voos or Jouvenet, and carved or painted ceilings accommodated with more or less taste to their present uses; while the arms and the portraits of the grand-masters, here and there recall the ancient inhabitants of these chivalric palaces, now

¹ *La Religion* is the phrase used in Malta to designate collectively the Order of St. John.—TRANS.

become English residences. I was surprised to find a portrait by Lawrence—a George III. or IV.—all satin and scarlet, facing a Louis XVI., well enough painted, although not quite so much bespangled as the English monarch.

One of these enormous halls had been turned into a ball-room ; and from one of the pillars still hung a printed card of waltzes, quadrilles, etc. This little circumstance, although natural enough, made us smile. It would have enlivened the ghosts of the young warriors, if by chance they had visited in the night their ancient abode. The crabbed elders alone would have been displeased, if even they ; for after all, these same military monks led a joyous life enough, and their “ inns ” more resembled taverns than monasteries.

The Throne of England, with its dais, its emblazonings, and its canopy, lifts itself proudly in the place where once stood the chair of the grand-master of the Order ; and lithographed portraits of the numerous progeny of Prince Albert and Queen Victoria, are suspended from the astonished walls of this home of celibacy.

I had wished to see the museum of arms, to touch the helmets dented by the blade of Damas, and the breast-plates, battered by the stones of catapults, under which had throbbed such noble and daring hearts—those shields emblazoned with the Cross of the Order, against which had splintered the lances of the Saracens—but after an hour of waiting and inquiry, we learned that the keeper had “ gone into the country, and *taken the keys with him !* ”

At this superb response, I thought myself again in Spain ; where, seated before the door of some monument, I had waited until the keeper should finish his siesta, and find it convenient to admit me. It was necessary, there-

fore, to forego the inspection of these iron relics of heroism, and direct my course elsewhere.

To finish with the knights, I turned my steps toward the church of St. John;—the Pantheon of the Order. Its façade, with a triangular porch flanked by two towers terminating in stone belfries, having for ornament only four pillars, and pierced by a window and door, without sculpture or decoration, by no means prepares the traveller for the splendour within.

The first thing which arrests the sight, is an immense arch, painted in fresco, which runs the whole length of the nave. This fresco, unhappily much deteriorated by time, is the work of Matteo Preti, called the Calabrèse; one of those great second-rate masters, who, if they have less genius, have often more talent, than the princes of the art. What there is of science, facility, spirit, expression, and abundant resource, in this colossal picture, is beyond description.

Each section of the arch contains a scene from the life of St. John, to whom the church is dedicated, and who was the patron of the Order. These sections are supported, at their descent, by groups of captives—Saracens, Turks, Christians, and others—half-naked, or clad in the remains of shattered armour, and placed in positions of humiliation or constraint, who form a species of barbaric caryatides strikingly suited to the subject. All this part of the fresco is full of character, and has a force of colouring very rare in this species of picture. These solid and massive effects, give additional strength to the lighter tone of the arch, and throw the skies into a relief and distance singularly profound. I know no similar work of equal grandeur, except the ceiling by Fumiani in the church of St. Pantaleone at Venice, representing the life, martyrdom, and apotheosis of that

saint. But the style of the *décadence* makes itself less felt in the work of the Calabrese than in that of the Venetian. In recompense of this gigantic work, the artist had the honour, like Carravaggio, to be made a knight of the Order.

The pavement of the church is composed of four hundred tombs of knights, incrustated with jasper, porphyry, verd-antique, and precious stones of various kinds, which should form the most splendid sepulchral mosaic conceivable. I say *should* form, because at the moment of my visit, the whole floor was covered with those immense mats, so constantly used for carpeting the southern churches—a usage which is explained by the absence of pews or chairs, and the habit of kneeling upon the floor to perform one's devotions. I regretted this exceedingly; but the crypt and the chapels contain enough sepulchral wealth to offer some atonement.

These chapels—extremely rich in arabesques, and in carvings of foliage and flowers, intermingled with crosses, coats-of-arms, and fleurs-de-lis, the whole gilded with the finest gold—astonish with their richness those who are only acquainted with the French churches; distinguished, as they are, by a severe simplicity and a sentiment of melancholy. This profusion of ornament, these gildings and marbles, appear, to the French, better suited to the decoration of a palace than a church; for French Catholicism is, after all, somewhat Protestant.

The tomb of Nicholas Cotoner—one of those grand-masters who contributed most largely to the splendour of the Order, and who expended their private fortunes in endowing Malta with monuments of utility or magnificence,—is not in the best taste, but is wonderfully rich, and constructed of the most costly materials. This tomb is a type of all the others, wherein the emblems of religion

mingle with the symbols and trophies of war ; as becomes the insignia of an Order at once military and religious.

The hour grows later ; and the steamer waits for no laggards. Pass we once more through the streets of St. John, and of St. Ursula the picturesque, with their flights of steps, their terraces, their projecting balconies, and the shops with which they are lined, and the crowds which perpetually mount and descend their stairways ; the *Strada-stretta*, which had in former times the privilege to serve as a duelling-ground for the members of the Order, in which they could not be disturbed ; cast your eye from the height of the ramparts, over the tawny landscape around, intersected by walls of stone, devoid of shade or vegetation, and devoured by a fierce sunlight ; look at the sea, from the heights of the Piazza Regina sprinkled with English tombs ; traverse by boat the Marse ; pass through the noble street of La Sangle ; and remount the deck of the steamer, with the regret of being unable to bring away a pair of those graceful vases of Maltese stone, which the inhabitants carve with knives in a fashion the most ingenious and elegant.

It is half-past four, and the steamer lifts her anchor at five. An amusement purely local is, however, reserved for us, as the *bouquet* of our brief sojourn at Malta. A crowd of small boats surrounds us, filled with young rogues of boys quite naked. The Maltese swim like ducks at the moment of emerging from the egg, and are wonderful divers. We throw from the deck a piece of silver into the sea. The water is so limpid in the harbour that its descent can be traced for nearly twenty feet. These rogues watch the fall of the coin, dive after it at the instant, and bring it up with them three times out of four ; an exercise as favourable to their health as to their pockets.

The reader must excuse me for not speaking about the catacombs, the hill of Bengemma, the remains of the Temple of Hercules, the Grotto of Calypso (for the learned pretend that Malta is the veritable Ogygia of Homer), and some other minor localities, simply because I have not seen them ; and it is hardly worth while to reproduce for your edification what others may have said about them.

To-morrow morning we hope to discern the shores of Greece. I am not so insanely classical as I ought to be ; therefore this prospect rather alarms me. One feels always a certain apprehension, when about to behold in substance and reality, a country dimly seen since our childhood through the mists of tradition, and hallowed by the dreams and visions of classic poetry.

III.

SYRA.

TO-MORROW, during the day, we shall be in sight of Cape Matapan; a barbarous designation, which hides the melody of its antique name, as a coating of lime smothers a delicate piece of sculpture.

Cape Tenarus is the extreme point of a deeply-indented mulberry leaf, spread out upon the sea, which is now called the Morea, but in olden time the Peloponnesus.

As to-morrow approaches, all the passengers are on deck gazing towards the horizon, in the direction indicated, three or four hours before it is possible to distinguish anything. The magical word "Greece," arouses imaginations the most inert; men of commerce or trade, to whom all ideas of art or poetry are totally strange, nevertheless find themselves excited by some vague emotion, and begin to inquire for "Lempriere's Dictionary"—that surface-mine of classic riches.

At length, a faint line of violet is visible above the waves, on the extreme verge of the horizon. It is Greece. A mountain shows a graceful and prolonged outline stretched upon the level wave, like a nymph who reclines upon the sand after a bath—beautiful, elegant, worthy of this sculptorial land.

"What mountain is that?" I inquired of the captain. "Mountain? oh! that's Taygete," replied he courteously; as if he had said Montmartre, or any other common-place

locality. At that name of Taygeta, a fragment of verse from the "Georgics" recurred at once to my memory, and

" Virginibus bacchata Lacænis,
Taygeta ! "

continued to repeat itself in my mind, like the burthen of a song. And what can one say about a Grecian mountain, better than a line of Virgil ?

Although it was the middle of June, and very warm, the summit of this mountain was silvered with streaks of snow ; and I thought of the rosy feet of those young girls of Laconia, who passed as Bacchantes over Mount Taygeta, and left the imprint of their light footsteps upon the whitened pathways !

Cape Matapan extends between two deep bays, which it divides by its projection—the Gulf of Coronea, and that of Kolokythia. The Cape is a point of land arid and barren, like all the shores of Greece. When this is passed, there is visible on the right hand a mass of rocks, tawny, consumed by drought, burned by heat, devoid of vegetation, and even of earth : that is Cerigo, the ancient Cytherea, the island of myrtles and roses, the beloved abode of Venus, with whose name it is inseparably associated ! What would Watteau have said, with his "Embarkation for Cytherea," all blue and rose-colour, in face of this sterile shore of naked rock, developing its harsh outlines beneath the glare of a sun without shade, and seeming to offer, perhaps, a cavern for the penitential abode of an anchorite, but certainly neither shady bower nor bosky dell for the tender dalliance of lovers. Gerard de Nerval had, however, the pleasure of seeing, upon the shore of Cytherea, a gibbet and its occupant, carefully guarded from the weather by a canopy of oilcloth ; which proved at least the presence of a justice most considerate and comfortable.

The *Leonidas* passed too far from land to let its passengers enjoy so charming an item of detail, or ascertain with how many gallowses the island was garnished at that particular moment.

Have the ancients lied to us, and assumed the existence of lovely and ravishing situations, where there are now but stony islands and barren earth? It is difficult to believe that their descriptions (of which it had been then easy to verify the accuracy) were pure fantasy. Doubtless this soil, worn by human activity, is at length exhausted. It has died with the civilisation which it supported; wasted by its production of master-pieces of genius and heroism. What we now see, is but its skeleton—the skin, the muscles, have all crumbled into dust.

When the soul departs from a country, it must be that it dies like a body; otherwise, how explain a change so absolute and so universal;—for what I say, applies to nearly the whole of Greece—

“’Tis Greece, but living Greece no more!”

although certain of its shores, desolate and inanimate as they are, retain still some beauty of outline, and some purity of colour.

We pass between Cerigo and Servi—another island of pumice-stone—and, doubling Cape Malia, come out into the Archipelago. The horizon is peopled with sails; brigs, caravels, and schooners, cutting the water in every direction. The weather is admirable; no swell, no rolling. A light breeze gently fills our mizen, and lends a slight assistance to our wheels, which break with their paddles a sea as smooth as glass, in which might well swim the mythological *cortèges* of Amphitrite and Galatea; and which is not disturbed by even the gambols of the por-

poises—those tritons of natural history, who might at a distance be mistaken for marine deities. The land has fled, and shows itself only as a light mist on the extreme verge of the heavens; and since there is nothing to be seen at a distance, let us take a glance at the new passengers whom we embarked at Malta.

These are Levantines, seated or couched upon their carpets at the front of the vessel, near the hampers which contain their provisions, and the rolled-up mattresses on which they stretch themselves at night. A Levantine on a journey, carries always three things: his carpet, his chibouque, and his mattress. One of these individuals, somewhat old, is dressed in a faded brown pelisse, which is braided with gold at the back, although the rest of his costume is not only simple, but somewhat shabby. He has with him a little boy, with sparkling and intelligent black eyes.

Two or three Greeks have established themselves not far from the Levantine. They wear the tunic, and a white jacket elegantly ornamented; but, horrible to tell, and yet more horrible to behold, these noble Hellenists wear *cotton caps*, like the people of Lower Normandy.

Oh, Greece! Classic land! Was it thine intention to break my heart and rob me of my last illusion, in displaying to me the visages of two of thy sons, beneath caps of such vulgarity! It is true that these cotton caps, seen closely, display certain embroidery in thread, which mitigates somewhat their insignificance; and that one may allege, that Paris bewitched the lovely Helen in a Phrygian cap; the Phrygian cap being nothing else than a cotton cap, coloured scarlet.

Upon the deck, Viyier, the celebrated horn-player (whose refined drollery equals his professional talent, and whom the Italian steamer had brought to us), recounted,

amidst a circle of enchanted listeners, the prodigious history of Mastoc Riffardini and his lieutenant Pietro ; while a lovely, blue-eyed young girl, on the way to Athens with her father, lounged listlessly upon a sofa, and allowed her gaze to wander around the serene air, while she smiled vaguely at the narrative.

Relying upon the captain's assurance, that no island would come in sight before six or seven o'clock in the evening, we consented to go down to dinner. When we returned to the deck, Milo and Anti-Milo were in view, already bathed in shades of violet by the approach of twilight. The character was still the same : sterile steeps and naked slopes ; but what matter ? From this barren earth did there not spring marvellous fruit ? This infertile soil, more rich than that of Beauce and Touraine, did it not produce that wonder of art, that model of form the purest and the most life-like—the radiant Venus, the adoration of poets and artists ; and who has had but to throw aside the dust of centuries, to restore her altars ? For before her footstool all the world is Pagan ; the lapse of time disappears, and one is ready to offer up the accustomed sacrifice of doves and sparrows to the goddess. What a civilisation must that of Greece have been, when an insignificant island like Milo, contained such a master-piece of art ! It is said, that, in the island, they recount, to those who care to listen, how the missing arms of the statue lay on the ground near the figure, having been exhumed with it, and were lost by mere negligence. I offer no guarantee of this rumour ; but, at Milo, such is certainly the current belief.

The sun had disappeared behind us, but it was not dark, nevertheless ; the milky way streaked the heavens with its broad zone of opal ; and it would seem that Hercules must have bitten very sharply the breast of

Juno, to judge by the innumerable patches of white which spot the nocturnal azure. The stars sparkle with inconceivable lustre, and the reflection of their beams scintillates in the water in long streams of fire. Millions of phosphoric sparks appear and vanish like glow-worms, in the wake of the steamer. This phenomenon, common in the warm seas of the Levant and the tropics, is produced by myriads of microscopic infusoria (*animalculæ*), and one can imagine nothing more picturesque. This night will live in my memory, as one of the most splendid that I have ever witnessed. We sail between two depths of lapis-lazuli, traversed by veins of gold, and sprinkled with diamonds! The moon—absent, or still so small as to be scarcely distinguishable—leaves in all its splendour this night of blue and gold, which her silvery rays would have rendered pale and confused. Two steamers, coming from the opposite direction, contribute, with their lights of red and green, to the general illumination. Nearly everybody passed the night on deck; and it was only the chill and gray air of the morning, which drove us to our cabins.

With the return of day, we pass between Serpho and Siphanto. Serpho, to which we coast the nearer, is the ancient Seripho—a place of transportation under the Roman emperors—and it seems still a singularly suitable place for such a lugubrious purpose. Mountainous hills, brown and dusty, break the surface of the island; and, with the glass, some low stone walls are discoverable, and some dark spots, which should be cultivated fields. A town, or rather a hamlet, terraced upon a steep hillside, stands out to view by its whiteness. All this, without the transparent atmosphere, and clear sunlight of Greece, would wear an aspect utterly miserable; but these parched spots of earth také, beneath that glowing sun, a tone and colour quite superb.

At sea, as among mountains, the distances and dimensions of objects are often singularly deceitful. Beside Serpho stands an island called Boni, or Poloni, which seemed to be about twenty feet in height, until a schooner, in passing close by it, afforded a scale of measurement. This island, which had the look of a large stone fallen into the water, was at least three times the height of the schooner's masts.

After Serpho and Siphanto, we come to Paros and Anti-Paros—the quarry which furnished to the sublime sculptors of Greece, the glowing substance of their divinities; and to the architects the white columns of their temples. In this ancient archipelago of the Cyclades, the islands succeed each other without interruption; and each revolution of the paddle-wheels, causes another to rise from the sea before us. Scarcely has one shore sunk beneath the wave, when another appears; blue in shadow or golden with sunlight. To the right, to the left, you see everywhere some spot dignified by a name sonorous or celebrated; and you are amazed, that so much of fable, of history, and of poesy, could have found birth and scope in so narrow a space.

Here you behold, scattered around upon the blue carpet of waters, islands which have given being to some god, some hero, or some poet; and although now stripped of their mantles of verdure, yet still beautiful, and acting irresistibly upon the mind, by the force of association. From each of these barren rocks, has sprung a poem, a temple, a statue, or a medal, unequalled as yet, even by our civilisation, of the perfection of which we are so proud!

In the morning we were before Syra. Seen from the roads, Syra looks very much like a smaller Algiers. On a groundwork of mountain, of the warmest tint of sienna or burnt topaz, plant a triangle of dazzling whiteness, of

which the base buries itself in the sea, and the apex is occupied by a church, and you have the most exact idea of this town; yesterday a formless collection of hovels, but which the passage of the steamers will soon render the queen of the Cyclades.

Some windmills, with wheels of eight or nine wings, vary this angular picture. For the rest, there is not a tree nor a blade of grass to be seen, so far as the eye can reach. A number of vessels, of all sizes and forms, define the tracery of their slender rigging against the white masses of the town, as they lie closely moored along the entire shore; small boats move briskly to-and-fro; the water, the earth, the sky, are all bathed in light, and everything seems instinct with life.

A perfect fleet of canoes and skiffs, now begin to direct their course towards us, at full speed; forming a species of regatta, of which the steamer is the winning-post.

The deck is quickly covered with a crowd of swarthy fellows, with noses like eagles' beaks, flashing eyes, and surpassingly ferocious moustachios, who offer their services in much the same tone that certain other gentlemen adopt in demanding "your money, or your life." Some wear the cap of the Greeks (they seem fully entitled to do so),¹ with immense trousers, secured at the waist by a woollen sash, and jackets of dark blue; others, the tunic, the white jacket, and the cotton cap, or a small straw hat with a black band. One was superbly dressed, and seemed as if got up as a model for a sketch; and he well merited the epithet that the orators in Homer give to the auditors whom they wish to propitiate: *Euknemides Achaioi* (well-booted Greeks), for he had the most dashing pair of *knemides* that it is possible to imagine; stitched,

¹ An allusion to the use (once familiar in England, but now better known in France) of the word "Greek," as synonymous with "black-leg" or "blackguard."—TRANS.

embroidered, inlaid in colours, and ornamented to the utmost. His tunic, very ample, and dazzlingly clean, was confined at the waist by an embroidered belt; his waistcoat, braided and ornamented with buttons of gold-filagre, displayed the sleeves of a fine linen shirt; and upon one shoulder was gracefully thrown a jacket of bright scarlet, enriched with arabesques of gold.

This triumphal sort of personage, was no other than the dragoman, who offers his services to travellers for Greece; and probably he thought to entice his customers, by the brilliant and national style of his costume, like the lovely girls of Procida and Nisida, who assume their dresses of velvet and gold, only for the admiration of the English travellers.

On landing, the first thing that struck my eyes, was an inscription in Greek, announcing "European and Turkish baths." It had a singular effect, to see so familiarly inscribed upon a wall, the characters of a language that one regards as dead, and knows only by that "garden" of "Greek roots," in which he digs while at school. From my eight years at college, I retain enough Greek to read the signs, and the names of the streets; and therefore, as you see, have not altogether lost my time.

Thanks to these classic souvenirs, I know that I am in the "Street of Mercury" (*odos tou Hermou*), which leads to the "Place Othon." In the centre of this Place, rises a triumphal-arch of wood, enwreathed with branches of laurel, which testifies to the recent visit of King Otho,—the Bavarian monarch of the land of Pelops.

M. Vivier, who landed with me, declares himself seized with a desire to civilise this savage island, and teach the natives the true manner of making soap-bubbles, filled with tobacco smoke; an art of which they seem rather ignorant, in so far as one may judge from their physiognomy.

We enter a café, where Vivier, with imperturbable coolness, calls for water, soap, some paper, and a pipe. This order rather surprises the waiter, who seems to consider that the gentleman is cleanly, and wishes to wash his hands; and he accordingly produces with unconscious innocence all that is necessary for the manufacture of soap-bubbles. At sight of the first bubble which escapes from the tube, brilliantly opalised by the white smoke confined in its frail envelope, surprise arrests each cup of coffee on its way to the lips of the drinkers. But when another transparent globe, furnished, like a balloon, with an opaque parachute, mounts in its turn, and, floating in the sun, reflects all the colours of the prism, their admiration knows no bounds. A large circle is formed, to watch with intense interest the floating bubbles. When the enthusiasm has reached its height, Vivier clears the billiard table, and pours out upon the green cloth, as if to supply the place of the ivory balls, an equal number of bubbles, rolling about and “cannoning” at the slightest breath.

“See how rapidly these people civilise!” exclaims Vivier to me; on pointing out a moustachioed Greek, of most truculent aspect, who is rolling a piece of soap about in a glass of water, seized with a sudden fever of imitation;—“already their manners begin to soften!”

At the end of a quarter of an hour, one would have supposed the café occupied by a band of Indian jugglers: it was only soap-bubbles ascending and descending in all directions. An hour later, all the island was occupied in blowing soap, water, and smoke through paper tubes, with all the gravity which so important an operation merited. —Why be astonished that the inhabitants of Syra were amused, by an exhibition which had made all the Parisian loungers on the Place de la Bourse, keep their noses in the air for six months together?

While my friend performed these prodigies, I examined the interior of the café, whitewashed and adorned with some miserable coloured images of St. John. The most characteristic object, consisted of two pictures in fine embroidery, representing some Turks on horseback, and signed "Sophia Dapola, 1847;" a boarding-school master-piece.

The quay is lined with shops of all sorts; fishmongers, butchers, confectioners, tobacconists; restaurants and taverns of every grade; and presents an exceedingly animated scene. It is constantly crowded with a world of sailors, porters, boatmen, gazers, and purchasers, of all nations and all costumes. From the verge of the quay, you can shake hands with the shipping; and the shore lives on terms of the greatest intimacy with the sea.

Nothing could be more amusing or more picturesque. Among the tarry coats and trousers, shines out every now and then, a brilliant and almost theatrical costume of Pallikari or Armatolia.

Tired at last of this uproar, we seat ourselves in a street parallel to the quay, and beside a café furnished with external benches (for at Syra they live much in the open air), and we are served with lemon ices infinitely superior to those of Tortoni, and equal to those of the Café de la Bolsa, at Madrid; which is to say all that can be said in the way of commendation.

Yonder passes a splendid-looking Greek, in full costume, free from all French innovation. There is no dress at once so elegant and so noble, as that of the modern Greek. That scarlet cap, overhung by a tassel of blue silk; the waistcoat and jacket, with hanging sleeves braided and embroidered; the belt bristling with arms; the tunic hanging in ample folds, like a drapery of Phidias; form together a costume full of grace and dignity.

The Greeks lace themselves excessively, and a hussar

or a fashionable lady might envy their taper waists. This slenderness of waist throws out the bust, gives breadth to the chest, and lightness to the skirt of the tunic.

I have just said that this Greek was handsome—but do not imagine the profile of Apollo or of Meleager; the nose in perfect line with the forehead, like those of the antique statues; for the Greeks of the present day have mostly aquiline noses, and approach more nearly the Arabian or Jewish type, than is generally supposed. It is possible, that in the interior there is a race of people in whom the primitive national character is more distinctively maintained. I speak only of that which I have seen.

Syra presents the phenomenon of a town in ruins, and a town in course of construction, at one and the same moment—a singular contrast. The lower town is crowded with scaffoldings, trenches, and rubbish, which obstruct all the streets, and houses seem to be growing under the eye. In the upper town, everything totters and crumbles;—life deserts the head to take refuge in the feet.

I wander through the whole of modern Syra, mounting from street to street; and one thing strikes me forcibly—that is, the very small number of women whom I encounter. With the exception of some old women and some little girls, whose age or whose youth precludes jealousy on their account, the few women whom I meet quicken their pace, or retard it, as I pass, with the evident purpose of avoidance. Their costume is by no means characteristic. A common dress of English calico, and a black gauze turban twisted around the head, and you have the whole. It would seem that the oriental system of seclusion has extended something of its effect even to this point. You do not see a single female in the shops, and it is the men who sell in the markets, who go to market, and who bring home the purchases.

Just now, bursts out a superb explosion of ringing laughter, peal upon peal. It is a little girls' school, which I am passing, and the inmates of which favour me with this salute. It seems that I appear to them profoundly ridiculous, although I don't know why, and "I pity their taste."

The mistress is at the gate, and indicates that I may enter to examine the interior of the school. I do so, and find a beautiful collection of black eyes, white teeth, and masses of dark hair.

I entered, also, a Greek church, of very simple architecture, adorned internally with images in the Byzantine style, overlaid with plates of gold, and with brown heads and hands, similar to those which I had previously seen at Leghorn. A species of portico forms a screen, and shuts out from the faithful the view of the sanctuary, which encloses only an altar covered with a white cloth. They showed us a cross, and divers ornaments, in silver-gilt, of a rude and barbaric workmanship, but not deficient in character.

A kind of steep road separates the ancient Syra from the modern. This bridge crossed, the ascent commences, across perpendicular streets, paved like the beds of torrents. I scramble along, with two or three comrades, among crumbling walls and sunken ruins; among stones which roll at the touch, and squeaking pigs, who, disturbed by our approach, seek safety by rubbing their blue backs against our legs. Through half-open doors, I see meagre and haggard forms, who cook some unknown viands over fires gleaming in the deep shadow. The men, with countenances like brigands in a melodrama, abandon their pipes for an instant, to observe the passage of our little party, with an air by no means gracious or conciliating.

The road becomes so steep, that we mount nearly upon

all-fours, through dark labyrinths, vaulted passages, and staircases in ruins. The houses rise one above another in such fashion, that the threshold of the upper is level with the summit of the lower. Each ruin has the air of seeking to climb to the top of the hill, by setting its foot upon the head of its neighbour, in a road made rather for goats than men. The merit of the ancient Syra seems to be its inaccessibility to everything but vultures and eagles. It is a charming site for the nests of birds of prey, but singularly unsuitable for human habitation.

Breathless, and streaming with perspiration, we reach at length the narrow platform upon which rises the church of St. George—a platform entirely paved with tombs—and there we are certainly amply rewarded, by a magnificent panorama, for the fatigue of our ascent. Behind us is seen the crest of the mountain upon which Syra is perched; to the right, facing the sea, yawns an immense and broken ravine—an accident of the locality, singularly and savagely romantic; at our feet, lie the white houses of upper and lower Syra; in the distance, the sparkling waters of the sea; and around us, Delos, Myconia, Tinos, and Andros, bathed in such tints of rose and purple, that they more resemble a picture than reality. When we have sufficiently admired this wonderful view, we allow ourselves to roll down, like an avalanche, upon the lower town, and proceed to finish our evening at a sort of *redoute*, situated upon a point which projects into the sea; where we smoke our cigarettes, and listen (over a lemonade) to a band of Hungarian musicians performing selections from Italian operas.

Some females, clad in the French fashion, except the head-dress, walk together (escorted by a husband or a lover) about the grounds, which are covered with tables and chairs, at which are scattered the tunic-clad Pallikaris

taking their coffee, or bubbling the water of their narghiles.

In front of us, the sea is starred with the lights of vessels; behind, the lights of Syra spangle with stars of gold the purple mantle of the mountain. It is lovely! Our boats await us at the quay, and a few strokes of the oars place us on board the *Leonidas*, fatigued, but delighted.

To-morrow, we address our course to Smyrna; and I shall, for the first time, set my foot on the shores of Asia—that cradle of the world—that glowing soil on which the sun rises, and which it quits with regret, to visit the colder and more sombre West.

IV.

SMYRNA.

AT ten in the morning, when the steamer which touches at the Piræus had taken off the passengers destined for Athens, the *Leonidas* tranquilly resumed her route, over a superb sea ; as pure and as tranquil as Lake Lemn. Delos, which we coast, has a singular mythological cosmogony. I know not if any geologist has attempted scientifically to elucidate what there may be of actual truth at the bottom of the legend ; but meanwhile, this is the origin of Delos, according to tradition.

Neptune, by a blow of his trident, caused this island to rise from the sea, to afford Latona an asylum from the persecutions of Juno, where she could in safety give birth to Apollo and Diana. Apollo, in recognition of the place of his birth, rendered it stationary upon the waters, instead of floating, as it had previously been ; and placed it in the midst of the Cyclades. May we not see here, the narrative of one of those submarine volcanic eruptions, which throw up islands in the sea, of which some soon perish, like the island of Iulia, which sank again into the waters whence it had emerged ? Or shall we take to the very letter, the epithet “floating,” in admitting that Delos was originally a mass of seaweed, trunks of trees, and marine agglomerations, lying loosely upon the waters, attached subsequently to some firmer base, and gradually becoming transformed into habitable earth, by the action

of the sun and the elements? Or otherwise, shall we adopt yet another hypothesis, and conjecture that, owing to its small size, and its situation as one of a constellation of marine Pleiades, closely resembling each other, Delos was frequently missed by the primitive navigators (who lacked all accurate means of directing their course), and thus acquired the reputation of a wandering island—a supermarine vagabond?

This is not the place to discuss this question *ex professo*. I raise it only, leaving to the more learned the task of solving the riddle which has presented itself to me, in thus passing the hallowed birth-place of Apollo and Diana.

Delos was in ancient times an object of extreme veneration. There stood an altar to Apollo, which the deity had himself constructed, at the ripe age of four years, out of the horns of goats killed by Diana upon Mount Cynthus, and which passed for one of the wonders of the world. This sacred soil was considered so deserving of respect, that “no dogs were admitted;” and all persons in danger of death were removed from the island, because it was forbidden to profane by interment this divine spot, revered even by barbarians.

The Persians, who ravaged the other islands of Greece, approached Delos with their fleet of a thousand ships; but they forebore all depredation and all violence.

Now, Delos is but an arid spot of earth, where Latona would be troubled to find the shade of even an olive tree to protect her couch. The island retains nothing but the right to its luminous etymology; the sun seeming still to gild it lovingly.

All the Cyclades are so small, that in running close beside them in a steamer, it is easy to trace in the reality, the forms and outlines indicated on the map. Nature itself

resembles here a map in relief, and coloured upon a grand scale. It has a striking effect, thus to create a palpable geography, and seize all the details of things as in a model; and even more so, to traverse in so little time places which occupy so large a place in imagination and in history.

The channel which separates Tinos from Myconia, being passed, we enter a sea more open and free from islands. The day glides on, bright and serene. The perfect placidity of the water permits persons the most squeamish to make a deliberate dinner, without fear and without remorse. After lounging upon deck, and setting our watches by the chronometer in the binnacle—there being an hour and a quarter difference of time between Paris and Constantinople—we all descend to bed, in order to be aroused early in the morning, to see the sun ascend the horizon behind Smyrna—the City of Roses.

In the night, we stopped a little while at Chios (the “Isle of Wines,” as Victor Hugo styles it in his “Orientales”) in order to take in freight. The noise of the bales rolling along the deck, and the clatter of the feet of the porters, waked me. I mounted to the head of the companion-way, but could see only a mass of darkness, amidst which moved lights, like those specks of fire which flash about the ashes of newly burned paper.

At early day we were in the harbour before Smyrna; a graceful curve, at the base of which extends the town. What struck my eyes at that distance, was a great number of cypress trees, rising above the houses and blending their black cones with the white summits of the minarets; and a hill, still bathed in deep shadow, and surmounted by an old ruined fortress, the dismantled walls of which, standing out against the clear sky, formed an amphitheatre behind the houses of the town. Here was no longer the barren

and desolate aspect of the shores of Greece. The Asiatic coast seemed fresh and smiling in the rosy light of morning.

I avow, to my shame, that I had as yet seen but two of the five great portions of the world—Europe and Africa. It gave me, therefore, almost a childish delight to behold a third, Asia. The same view on a European shore, had assuredly not caused me the same gratification.

When shall I visit America and Polynesia? Heaven only knows! How many years one stupidly loses out of the allotted number! Really, a voyage of circumnavigation, *ought* to be an essential ingredient of a complete education; and there should be a ship in the service of each university, to take the students during their third year, and compel them to study the Universal Volume, the Book of the World; the best-written of all books, because written by the hand of God Himself.

It were to miss a famous matter of tradition, to visit Smyrna without seeing the “Bridge of Caravans;” and a Jewish dragoman, jabbering a little French and less Italian, soon collected a number of asses equivalent to ourselves, (in number I mean), to visit that locality; it being at the extremity of the town, and our time too scanty for making the excursion on foot. Besides, in the East, as is well known, there is nothing ridiculous in riding upon an ass; and the gravest and most dignified personages travel upon these quiet animals, on one of which Christ Himself did not disdain to make His entry into Jerusalem.

These asses were supplied with saddles and bridles, ornamented, and inlaid in different colours; and had nothing of that piteous aspect, with which our European “long-ears” seem to display a consciousness of being ridiculed. We quickly bestrode each his beast; and thus

behold us dashing through the streets; the dragoman at the head, the ass-driver at the tail. Excited by the guttural cries of this rear-guard of ours, who followed close upon their haunches despite the dust, and occupied himself in cudgelling the hindmost, our donkeys took up a rapid enough pace. As we galloped along, we cast a glance at the houses, the cemeteries, and the gardens; but this is not the place to describe them. Let us hasten to reach the Bridge of Caravans, for as it is still morning, we may arrive in time to see a caravan in the act of departure.

This celebrated bridge—which they have unfortunately disfigured by a villanous balustrade of cast-iron—crosses a small and shallow stream, in which half a dozen ducks are paddling as familiarly as if the divine old blind man eloquent, had not there bathed his dusty feet, in those waters which the lapse of three thousand years has not dried up. This rivulet is the Meleus, whence Homer derived one of his most familiar designations. It is true, that some learned men refuse to this brook the name of Meleus; but others, yet more learned, declare that Homer never existed, which certainly simplifies the question very much; but as for me, I am a poet; and I readily accept a legend, which attaches a memory and an association, to a spot already charming in itself.

Some immense plane trees, under which stands a café, overshadow one bank of the streamlet; while on the other, some gigantic cypresses indicate a cemetery. But let not this word arouse any lugubrious ideas. Beautiful tombs of white marble, inscribed in Turkish characters, of gold, blue, or green, and of a form quite different from those of Christian sepulchres, shine brightly beneath the trees, revealed by a gush of sunlight; and in all this there is nothing funereal, or calculated to excite, at

most, aught beyond a gentle and pleasing sadness, which is not without its charm.

At the head of the bridge, stands a sort of customs guard-house, occupied by some of those *Zebecques* with whose costume and aspect we are so familiar in pictures of Asiatic scenes: high conical turbans, white linen drawers, and sashes of enormous breadth, formidably garnished with yataghans and kandjars; blended with naked limbs of the colour of Spanish leather, a face brightened by an eagle's eye, and adorned by a "beak," which might claim the same origin, and moustachios like a dragoon. Of these, there lounged lazily upon a bench some three or four worthies,—vastly respectable, no doubt, but having decidedly more the look of banditti than of policemen or *douaniers*.

To let our donkeys take breath, we had seated ourselves beneath the trees, and been served with pipes and mastic—the "mastic" being a species of liqueur in use throughout the Levant, and especially in the Grecian islands, and of which the best comes from Chios. It consists of a strong spirit, in which is dissolved a sort of perfumed gum. It is drunken mixed with water, which it freshens and whitens, as does eau de Cologne. In fact, it is the *absynthe* of the East. This local beverage reminded me of the little glasses of *agua ardiente*, which I drank a dozen years before, on the road from Granada to Malaga, in going to the bull-fight with the *arriero* Lanza, and dressed in my *majo's* costume, which is long since eaten by worms, but which then had such a splendid pot of flowers embroidered on the back!

While we smoked and sipped, a file of a dozen camels, preceded by an ass wearing a bell, passed in processional style across the bridge, with their peculiar ambling step (which characterises also the giraffe and the elephant),

arching their backs, and waving their long ostrich necks. The strange outline of this misshapen animal, carries a foreign air in its very expression. When one encounters at large these animals, which at home we see only in menageries, one feels one's self decidedly *not* on the Boulevard de Gand.

We saw, also, two women scrupulously veiled, attended by a negro with a specially unpleasant countenance—an eunuch, no doubt. The East had begun to exhibit itself in unmistakeable fashion—camels, veiled women, eunuchs, turbans, and narghiles—the most obstinate imagination could no longer fancy itself still in Paris.

Before re-entering the town, we decided to visit the ruins of the ancient castle on the summit of Mount Pagus—the site of the Acropolis of antique Smyrna. I do not care much for ruins, when their beauty is gone and they are reduced to simple heaps of rubbish and stones. I lack that facility of falling into ecstasies over a mere word, with which those travellers are endowed, who are more susceptible of retrospective enthusiasm. But the summit of a mountain always affords a fine prospect, and I saw no objection to ascending Mount Pagus; which was reached, however, by paths not strewed with roses, but with stones of every size, which the asses “circumnavigated” with that sureness of foot which characterises them. These paths are vaguely traced, in the eastern fashion, on the hillside, and so faintly, as to resemble more a thread than a riband on its surface. They pass beside abandoned cemeteries, which are rapidly relapsing into their original condition of woods or fields; the tombs disappearing beneath vegetation, dust, and forgetfulness.

At a certain elevation, the view is superb. Smyrna lies extended below, with its houses of red and white—its red-tiled roofs—its screens of cypresses—its tufts of ver-

ture—its white domes, and its minarets, rising like pillars of ivory—its environs, with their variety of culture—and its harbour, forming a sort of liquid sky, yet more blue than the one above—and all this bathed in a fresh and silvery light, and pervaded by an air of unequalled transparency.

This panorama sufficiently admired, we re-descend by abrupt declivities, and lanes not far from perpendicular, through quarters as little Macadamised as picturesque. The houses of Smyrna are generally low—a ground floor, and a single floor above, forming the whole elevation. The white fronts are enlivened by paintings of arabesques, or foliage, in tints of brilliant blue, which give them the look of clean and fresh English porcelain. Between the windows, are often placed little houses of wood or plaster, pierced with holes, as an invitation to the swallows or martins to build their nests within—a touching hospitality which man offers to the birds, and which the latter accept with a confidence never abused in the East, where the ideas of the Brahmins respecting the life of animals—those humble brethren of man—seem to have been caught from the borders of India.

To this superstition is, perhaps, traceable the countless numbers of “dogs-errant” which infest the public streets, where they barely tolerate the passengers, to whom they never give way. They are seen in groups of three or four, couched in a circle in the middle of a street, and remain among your feet sooner than disturb themselves. In fact, one must either walk around them, or stride over them.

As we proceed, I admire, at the angles of the streets, pretty fountains, in the Turkish style, and ornamented with verses of the Koran, carved in relief; or a little cemetery, surrounded by walls pierced with grated windows, through which may be seen fowls pecking about

among the tombs, cats sleeping in the sun upon the marble slabs, and linen hanging to dry suspended between the cypresses. In the East, life is not so carefully separated from death as with us; but they jostle each other familiarly, like old friends. To sit, sleep, smoke, eat, or make love upon a tomb, carries with it here no idea of sacrilege or profanation; cows and horses feed in the cemeteries, or traverse them at will; and people promenade or make appointments there, absolutely as if the dead were not lying around and beneath, at the distance of a few feet or inches, stiff or mouldering in their coffins of larch.

The quarters which we traversed were so far “desolate,” that figures were sadly wanting in the landscape. We therefore desired the dragoman to conduct us to the Bezestín, which in an eastern city is always an interesting locality, on account of the crowd of costumes, and of people of all countries, whom the wish to sell, or buy, or see, or be seen, or the simple desire of lounging, draws thither. The English axiom, that “time is money,” would be utterly incomprehensible in the East; where every one busies himself in doing nothing, with a conscientiousness quite admirable; and where people pass the whole day seated upon a mat, without the effort of a single movement.

The Bezestín consists of an infinity of little streets, lined with shops (or rather alcoves), at half height, in which the merchants may be seen, seated or reclining, smoking or sleeping, or rolling in their fingers the *comboloi*—a sort of rosary, formed of an hundred grains, which correspond with the one hundred names of Allah.

By extending his arm, the merchant can reach the remotest angle of his establishment; the purchasers stand outside, and the transactions are concluded on the counter.

Nothing could seem less luxurious, as you perceive, than these stalls made of a square hole in a wall; but they nevertheless contain superb arms, costly saddles, precious stuffs, and master-pieces of gold and silver embroidery.

The streets of this bazaar are shaded by boards extended overhead in the form of an awning, but with a space between, as otherwise one could see nothing. These interstices admit the sun in streaks, which mark the pavement, like a zebra, with alternate bars of black and gold, and produce effects of light and shade, the most sudden and peculiar. A man just passing beneath one of these streams of sunshine, receives a dash of light upon his nose, as in a portrait by Rembrandt; the *feredje* of a woman brightens like a flash of rose-coloured flame; a narghile struck by a ray, gleams like a mass of carbuncles; and all the riches of the cavern of Ali Baba, seem to blaze in the recesses of a confectioner's shop! It is odd, that they have not covered these stalls with arbours of vines or creepers; although perhaps the sun is so fierce as to scorch them; but surely awnings of linen might advantageously supersede these aerial plankings.

Not far from the Bezestín rises a mosque, composed, like most others, of an agglomeration of cupolas flanked by minarets; which last I can liken to nothing better than the masts of ships, with their "tops" represented by balconies, from which the muezzins summon the faithful to prayer. Near this mosque, is a fountain for ablutions, formed by a circle of columns, with a barbarous sort of Corinthian capitals, coarsely painted in blue, and joined by a railing prettily wrought; the whole being covered by a projecting roof. The water passes around the entire fountain, in a sort of trench, where the Moslemah bathe their feet to the knees, and their hands to the elbows, according to the ritual of their religion; not to speak of the more thorough

ablution, which the amplitude of the eastern garments allows to be made, even in public, without inconvenience or impropriety.

It was the hour of prayer. We mounted the steps of the mosque, as far as the porch; beyond which it would have been dangerous to pass. The crowd was considerable, and the circuit of the mosque was insufficient to contain all the faithful. A mountain of shoes, sandals, and slippers, lay at the door of the mosque; and three lines of devotees, ranged beneath the portico and among the pillars, knelt with their faces turned towards Mecca, following the routine of the liturgy which the mollah read within. Whatever the religion, men who worship God sincerely are never really ridiculous; but nevertheless, the pious evolutions of these worthy Mohammedans—executed like a charge in twelve-time under the baton of a Prussian corporal—seemed to me, in spite of myself, singularly odd. I had to remind myself, that our religious ceremonies, would no doubt seem equally strange to them; and really with difficulty restrained a laugh, when all the worshippers, precipitating themselves upon their noses, presented, in lines of three deep, a perspective—or rather retrospective—view of their persons. Nothing of this would be grotesque to those who *did* it all; but I cannot help fancying, that if I were the object of their worship, I should find its manner so laughable, that I should be obliged to suppress my religion entirely.

From the mosque we went to the Greek church, which was hung with red calico, and daubed with modern frescoes, executed by Italian house painters. In fact, it much resembled the “Hall of Momus,” in some theatrical tavern of the Parisian suburbs. A priest, with violent gesticulation and utterance, delivered from a pulpit a sermon in modern Greek, no doubt very edifying, but which did not

greatly benefit us. In the external cloister, I observed upon the wall, a brazen tablet, to the memory of Clement Boulanger, the painter of the "Procession du Corpus Domini," the "Tarasco," and the "Fountain of Jouvence;" who died some years since, while on a scientific expedition to the ruins of Ephesus. The tomb of a compatriot in a foreign land, has always something of sadness in its associations, be it from an unacknowledged selfishness of humanity, or from a vague impression that the foreign soil presses more heavily upon the ashes which it covers. I had known Clement Boulanger, and the unexpected sight of this monument had a saddening effect upon me.

The "coming out" from either church or opera, offers great facilities for passing the "fair sex" in review; and if one suffers, in this instance, an infliction of the varieties of yellow, withered, and mummified old women, in black scarfs and bonnets, one is, at intervals, recompensed by a glimpse of some fair young head, pure and fresh beneath its butterfly turban of gauze and flowers.

Unfortunately, at Smyrna, the local costume stops there; a dress of Lyons silk, and a shawl worn in the European mode, completes the toilet. The fashionables have for head-dress, the hood of a cabriolet, without the wheels; in fact, the old-fashioned English "calash;" a name which, being a mere perversion of the French "caleche," was given in recognition of the cab-head model, upon which this sort of bonnet was "built." I must add, that I could not help believing, that most of the Smyrniote ladies whom I saw, had assisted nature somewhat in the matter of complexion, by a judicious use of white, red, and black. But I must also confess, that I don't particularly dislike "this style of painting," when it is applied to a really young and pretty face, and not used to cover wrinkles, or conceal the ravages of time.

In rambling on foot about the town—for we had dismissed our donkeys—we traversed a species of asylum founded by Baron Rothschild for poor Israelites. A cradle, suspended between two trees like an Indian hammock, threw somewhat of grace into this home of misery, deformity, and old age—that incurable malady! The infant within the cradle, was covered with a curtain of gauze to protect it from the insects, and its tiny hand alone escaped from its covering, and wandered gently around, as if to seize a rattle which it pursued in dreams.

We visited also the slave-market; a court surrounded by ruined arcades and crumbling buildings. There were for sale only two young negresses, who were couched listlessly upon a piece of old carpet, and guarded by their owner. As we passed the thresholds of the houses, a throng of little half-naked children, whose parents inhabit these ruins, crowded around us, soliciting alms in a most piteous manner.

One of the two slaves touched me extremely, by the indescribable expression of home-sickness in her eyes, and a melancholy (so to speak), animal in its character, like that of a captive gazelle. To European eyes, this expression is quite impossible; for the sorrow displayed is not a thought but an instinct. This poor negress had fine features, and much of the graceful type of the Sphynx and the columnar caryatides of Egypt, with a complexion of bluish-black, on which rested a sort of bloom, like that upon a dark and luscious plum. I would have bought her, had I known how to dispose of her afterwards; and I felt like Victor Hugo, with his little rose-coloured pig, in the great butchers' market at Frankfort. The owner wanted only 250 francs (ten pounds sterling), which did not seem very dear. But I had to content myself with giving her a few piastres, and some sugar-plums, which

she received with an antique gesture of acknowledgment—the arm laid upon the breast, with the palm of the hand outward. Her fingers, which I touched, were cold and smooth, like those of an ape.) /

Fatigued with walking, our little band installed itself in front of a café in the Bezestín, whither our circumvolutions had again brought us; and we rested there, till the time of departure, watching the crowds of Turks, Persians, Arabs, Kurds, Armenians, Tartars, and Jews, who passed before our eyes, in costumes sometimes splendid, sometimes shabby, but always picturesque. Never did kaleidoscope more varied revolve beneath a curious eye; and we saw there, in a single hour, represented by authentic specimens, all the types of the Orient, not excepting even India. I would give you a minute description of each individual, were I not afraid of not being on board the *Leonidas* in time; but we shall see them all again at Constantinople, where I propose to make a sojourn somewhat more extended.

V.

THE TROAD.—THE DARDANELLES.

DESPITE its great antiquity—for it existed already in the time of Homer—Smyrna retains little of its original splendour. I saw, for my part, no other ancient ruins, than three or four gigantic Roman columns, overtopping the frail modern architecture which surrounded them. These crumbling columns—relics of a temple of Jupiter or of Fortune, I am not sure which—are very remarkable, and ought to have exercised the sagacity of the learned. I saw them only from the top of a donkey's back; and am, therefore, unable to offer an elaborate opinion in regard to them.

The coasts of Asia are much less arid than those of Europe; and I remained on deck, so long as the daylight allowed me to distinguish the outlines of the land.

The next day, when the dawn appeared, we had passed Mytilene (the ancient Lesbos), the birth-place of Sappho. In front of us, on our right, is seen a flat expanse of land; it is the Troad:

“ Campos ubi Troja fuit; ”

the very soil of epic poetry, the theatre of fable, the spot doubly hallowed by the genius of Greece and the genius of Rome;—by Homer and by Virgil. It makes a strange impression, to find one's self thus in the midst of poetry and of mythology. As Æneas recited his history to Dido,

from the height of his lofty couch, I can say, from the height of the deck, and with more of truth,

“Est in conspectu Tenedos ;”

for there, behold the isle whence issued the serpents who wound in their deadly folds the unhappy Laocoon and his sons, and furnished the subject of a master-piece to the sculptor ;—Tenedos, over which reigned Phœbus-Apollo, the God of the silver bow, invoked by Chryses ;—and see, beyond, the soil which Protesilaus (the first victim of a war, doomed to destroy a nation) dyed with his blood, as with a propitiatory libation. That undefined heap of rubbish in the distance was the Scæan Gate, whence Hector issued wearing that scarlet-plumed helmet which so alarmed the little Astyanax ; and beside which were seated in the shade the old men who did homage to the beauty of Helen. That sombre mountain, clothed in a mantle of forest which extends to the verge of the horizon—that is Mount Ida, the scene of the Judgment of Paris, where the three rival goddesses—Juno with the snowy arms, Pallas-Athené of the sea-blue eyes, and Aphrodite of the magic girdle—stood revealed in undraped loveliness before the entranced rustic ; and where also Anchises proved the intoxication of celestial nuptials, and rendered Venus the mother of Æneas.

The Grecian fleets were ranged along this coast, upon which rested the black prows of the war-galleys, drawn halfway up upon the sands. The exactitude of Homer's local descriptions, is apparent in every detail of the scene. A strategist might easily trace, with the “Iliad” in his hand, every incident of that eventful siege.

While thus recalling my classic reminiscences, I gaze upon the Troad : Stalimene—the ancient Lemnos, which received in his fall Vulcan, precipitated from heaven—

rises from the sea, and lifts behind us its yellow promontories. I begin to wish that I were supplied, like Janus, with two faces. Two eyes, are really a very scant supply; and man is certainly much inferior in that respect to a spider,—who, according to some naturalists, has no less than eight thousand of those organs. I turn my head for a moment, to throw a glance upon that volcanic island, where were forged the arms-of-proof of the heroes favoured by the gods, and also those iron tripods, living slaves of metal, which served the Olympians in their celestial abodes; but the captain pulls me by the sleeve, to show me, upon the Trojan shore, a mound whose conical form betrays the handiwork of man; and which is said to cover the remains of Antilochus, the son of Nestor and Eurydice; the first Greek who slew a Trojan at the opening of the siege, and who himself perished by the hand of Hector, while parrying a blow which Memnon aimed at his father.¹ Does Antilochus truly repose beneath this tumulus? Tradition affirms it; and what inducement has tradition to tell a falsehood?

As we advance we discover two other tumuli, not far from a little village called Yeni-Scheyr, distinguished by a row of new windmills, similar to those of Syra. The nearest, as you approach from Smyrna, and the nearest also to the sea, is the tomb of Patroclus;—the dear friend, the brother-in-arms and in affection, the inseparable companion, of Achilles. There was erected that gigantic funeral pyre, sprinkled with the blood of innumerable victims, upon which Achilles, intoxicated with grief, cast four priceless steeds, two dogs of noble breed, and twelve Trojan youths—all sacrificed by his own hand to the manes of his friend; while around the pyre the mourning army celebrated funeral games, which continued for many days.

¹ According to Homer, Antilochus was killed by Memnon.

The second mound, farther inland, is the tomb of Achilles himself; or, at least, such is the name it bears. According to the Homeric legend, the ashes of Achilles were mingled with those of Patroclus in a golden urn; and thus the two friends, inseparable in life, were even more closely united in death. The gods themselves mourned the decease of the hero: Thetis issued from the sea with a choir of mourning nereids; the nine muses wept and chaunted mournful songs around the funeral couch; and the bravest of the warriors joined in sanguinary games in honour of the dead.

This mound, therefore, should be the tomb of some other chief,—Grecian or Trojan; very probably of Hector. In the time of Alexander, the place of the tomb of the hero of the “Iliad” was still known; for the conqueror of Asia paused there, saying that Achilles was indeed fortunate in having such a friend as Patroclus, and such a chronicler as Homer. Alexander had but Ephestion and Quintus Curtius; and yet his exploits surpassed those of the son of Peleus; and this time history was engrafted upon mythology.

While I talk about Homeric geography, and the heroes of the “Iliad” (a pedantry pardonable and innocent, in view of Troy), the *Leonidas* continues her voyage, retarded a little by the north wind, which is blowing strongly from the Black Sea; and we draw near the Strait of the Dardanelles, defended by two strong fortresses—the one upon the European, the other on the Asiatic coast. Their cross-fire bars the entrance of the strait, and renders access, if not impossible, at least exceedingly difficult, to a hostile fleet. But to finish with the Troad, let us observe, that beyond Yeni-Scheyr, a stream of water empties itself into the Bosphorus, which is said to be the ancient Simois, —or by some the Granicus.

The Hellespont, or Sea of Helle, is very narrow, and

resembles rather a river at its mouth, than a veritable sea. Its breadth does not exceed that of the Thames at Gravesend. As the wind was favourable for coming out into the *Ægean* Sea, we met a crowd of vessels, which approached us with all sail set, and studding-sails run out, and, from a distance, resembled the outline of women carrying a pail in each hand, and dancing along towards us. The European shore, which we coast somewhat closely, consists of rugged hills, spotted with some patches of vegetation, but of an aspect generally arid and monotonous. The Asiatic coast wears a much more cheerful look, and presents an appearance of northern verdure, which, according to preconceived ideas, would be more suitable to Europe. At one moment, we were so near the shore, as to discern five Turkish cavaliers, riding along a pathway, which ran round the base of the rising shore, and looked like a narrow strip of yellow riband. These horsemen served us as a scale, to measure the elevation of the shore, which proved much greater than we had supposed.

It was near this spot that Xerxes caused the bridge to be constructed which he designed for the passage of his army, and subsequently caused the sea to be flogged, for its disrespectful behaviour, in breaking the bridge constructed by so magnificent a monarch. Judged upon the spot, and under the excitement of its historic associations, this act, cited as the height of human vanity and folly, seems rather rational than otherwise.

One thinks also of Sestos and Abydos, made memorable by the legend of Hero and Leander; but finds the Helle-spont here contracted to a breadth of only 875 feet. Lord Byron, as is well known, renewed the exploit of Leander, without being a lover. In fact, he was himself the "Hero" of his own exploit; and, instead of finding a lovely maiden awaiting him, on his emerging from the

wave, he found only a fever. He took an hour and ten minutes to accomplish the feat, and seemed more proud of it, than of the authorship of "Childe Harold," or "The Corsair"—an *amour propre* of the swimmer, quite conceivable by those who have ever prided themselves upon their prowess in that art.

We paused for a moment, but without making a landing, before a town over which floated the standards of the consulates of many nations, and which was enlivened by the sails of several windmills, revolving furiously in the fresh breeze. Outside of the town, the earth was mottled with white and green tents, beneath which soldiers were encamped. I do not tell you the precise name of this place, because each person whom I asked gave it a different designation—an occurrence by no means rare in a country where, to the primitive Greek name, is superadded a Latin appellation, overlaid by a Turkish one, upon which is engrafted yet another, of either French or English, by way of rendering the matter quite clear. I believe, however, that this name was Chanak-Kalessi, which we Europeans render freely by "Dardanelles"—it being, in fact, the town which has given a name to the straits.

The wind, the current, and the small extent of the channel, render the waters somewhat rough; and the short swell tossed about, most unceremoniously, a boat with several rowers, whose occupants hailed the *Leonidas*, and boarded her, in order to proceed by her to their destination. This boat carried a Pasha, bound for Gallipolis, at the mouth of the Sea of Marmora. He was a big man, with thick neck and shoulders, and a large, heavy face, but with something fine beneath its heaviness. He was dressed in the horrible costume of the Nizam—the red "fez," or cap, and a blue frock-coat, buttoned straight to the throat. A numerous suite surrounded him—officers,

secretaries, pipe-bearers, and other domestic officers, without counting *cawas* and domestics. All these people unfolded carpets, or unrolled mattresses, and seated themselves upon them, with the exception of some few, better bred, who sat down upon the benches; and consoled themselves for taking that unnatural position, by holding one of their feet in one of their hands, as a comfort and an occupation.

Their luggage was curious. There were narghiles, enclosed in red morocco cases; packets of pipe-stems, of cherry or jasmin; baskets, covered with richly-gilded leather, to do duty as portmanteaus; rolls of Persian carpet, and piles of cushions and footstools. There were, among this band, some singularly striking "types." Among others, a fat youth, very plump, very rosy, very fair, who had the air of an enormous English baby, dressed up as a Turk; and a thin Greek, pointed, angular, with a muzzle like a fox, buried in a long pelisse of cloth, bordered with fur, similar to those in which the actors play Bajazet. These two enclosed the fat Pasha, like the two horns of a parenthesis, and appeared to vie with each other in entertaining their master. The costumes of the inferiors of the party were in keeping with their character;—broad belts, bristling with arms; embroidered vests; braided jackets, with superbly-decorated hanging sleeves; and the physiognomy of Albanian or Arnaout bandits. Thus clad, these vassals had the air of Eastern princes, and their masters that of *valets de place* out of work.

As the fast of Ramadan was in progress, neither master nor slave touched the chibouque; but were obliged to pass the time in sleeping, or in running the beads of their chaplets through their fingers.

Of the Sea of Marmora, properly so called, I can give no precise detail, because it was night when we traversed

its waters, and I was asleep in the recesses of my cabin, fatigued by a previous promenade of fourteen hours on deck. Above Gallipolis, the sea broadens considerably, to contract itself again at Constantinople. The Pasha and his suite were landed at Gallipolis; the minarets of which were indistinctly visible, amid the falling shadows of the evening.

When day appeared, on the Asiatic coast, the Olympus of Bithynia, crowned with eternal snows, reared its lofty crest amid the rosy clouds of morning, glistening with variegated shades of purple and silver. The coast of Europe, infinitely less bold, was also visible, dotted with ranges of white mansions and masses of verdure, above which rose tall chimneys of brick—obelisks of industry—the red colour of which, at a distance, rendered them strikingly like the red granite obelisks of Egypt. If I were not afraid of being accused of a desire to indite a paradox, I would say, that all this region seemed strikingly like the Thames, between the Isle of Dogs and Greenwich. The sky, very milky, opal-like, almost white, and suffused with a transparent mist, enhanced the illusion, until it seemed as if I were approaching London, in the Boulogne packet; and I almost needed, to undeceive myself, a glance at the red flag, bearing a silver crescent, which we had hoisted on entering the Dardanelles.

In the distance, now appears the little archipelago of the Isles of Princes—the scene of suburban water-parties from Constantinople, on their Sabbath (Friday). A few minutes more, and Stamboul itself appears in all its splendour.

Already, on the left, through the silvery veil of mist, the peaks of many minarets are visible—the Castle of the Seven Towers (where formerly ambassadors were imprisoned on the outbreak of war with the country which they

represented) displays its massive turrets and embattled walls; its base being washed by the sea, while its rear abuts upon the hill which rises abruptly behind. It was here that the ancient rampart commenced, which formerly encircled the town as far as Eyoub. The Turks call the castle Yedi-Kule, and the Greeks named it Heptapurgon. Its construction dates back to the Byzantine Emperors. It was commenced by Zeno, and finished by Commenus. Seen from the sea, it seems in a ruinous condition, and ready to crumble to pieces; nevertheless, it produces a striking effect, with its heavy outlines, its bulky towers, its massive walls, and its mingled aspect of bastile and fortress.

The *Leonidas*, relaxing her speed, in order not to arrive too early, grazes the angle of the Seraglio. It presents a range of long, whitewashed walls, relieved against screens of cypress and tamarind trees; apartments with trellised windows, and kiosks with overhanging roofs, with no pretence to symmetry. There is nothing to recall the magnificence with which a reader of "The Arabian Nights" unconsciously associates the word "seraglio;" and it must be confessed, that these wooden boxes, with their grated windows, enclosing the beauties of Georgia, Circassia, and Greece (houris of that paradise of Mohammed of which the Padischah is the deity), curiously resemble large cages filled with domestic fowls.

We Europeans, are in the habit of confounding Moorish and Turkish architecture, which have, in truth, nothing in common; and we make, involuntarily, an Alhambra of every seraglio—which is far enough from the reality. But these remarks do not prevent the Seraglio from offering a very pleasing aspect, with its brilliant white walls and its masses of dark verdure, lying between the clear sky and the blue water, whose rapid current washes its mysterious boundaries.

As we pass, there is pointed out to us an inclined plane, projecting from an opening in the wall, and overhanging the sea ; forming, in fact, a sort of “ shoot,” such as we see in mines and some kinds of factories. It is by that opening, it is said, that those Odalisques who are guilty of infidelity, or who have displeased the Sultan, are precipitated into the deep and rapid waters of the Bosphorus, enclosed in a sack together with a cat and a serpent ; these last being considered emblems of domestic infidelity and treachery.

At present, however, we are told that with the advance of enlightenment, these executions have been discontinued. And besides this, the tradition may be utterly false, romantically barbarous as it is. If it be not true, and I do not guarantee it, it has at least a local colouring of possibility ; and there is little doubt, that females have been sometimes submerged in the Bosphorus imprisoned in sacks, whether by this particular channel or otherwise.

We double the Seraglio-Point ; the *Leonidas* halts at the entrance of the Golden Horn. A marvellous panorama displays itself before our eyes, like the grand theatrical scene of some oriental spectacle.

The Golden Horn is a bay, of which the Seraglio-Point, and the port of Top-Hané, form the two capes, and which penetrates into the city, lying in an amphitheatre upon its two shores, as far as the “ Sweet Waters,” and the mouth of the Barbyzes, a little tributary stream. Its name of Golden Horn is derived, no doubt, from its forming a literal “ cornucopia ” for the city, and contributing to its wealth, by the facilities which it affords to the shipping, to commerce, and to naval constructions.

Waiting until we can land, let us make a pen and ink sketch, of the “ picture ” that we can paint by-and-by.

To the right, beyond the sea, rises an immense building,

regularly pierced by successive ranges of windows, and flanked at each angle by a sort of turret surmounted by a flag-staff. It is a barrack; the largest building, but by no means the most characteristic, in Scutari—the Turkish name of that Asiatic suburb of Constantinople, which displays itself on returning from the borders of the Black Sea, and lies upon the site of the ancient Chrysopolis, of which there now remains no vestige.

A little more remote, in the midst of the waters, rises, upon an islet of rocks, a lighthouse of dazzling whiteness, which is called Leander's Tower, or otherwise the Maiden's Tower; although the place has nothing in harmony with the legend of the two classic lovers. This tower, elegant enough in form, and which in this clear air looks like alabaster, forms a superb contrast to the deep blue of the surrounding waters.

At the entrance of the Golden Horn, Top-Hané appears; with its landing-place, its cannon-foundry, and its mosque, with the aërial dome and slender minarets, built by the Sultan Mahmoud. The palace of the Russian embassy lifts its proudly-elevated front above the red-tiled roofs and the tufts of trees, and seems to command attention as the feature of the town; yet, as the residences of the other ambassadors are far less assuming, there would seem to be no necessity for this self-assertion on the part of Russia.

The tower of Galata—the quarter occupied by the Frankish commerce—rises in the midst of the houses, covered with a brazen cupola, and towers above the ancient Genoese walls, which crumble at its base.

Pera, the peculiar residence of the Europeans, crowns the summit of the hill, with its ranges of cypress trees, and its mansions of stone; forming a striking contrast to the wooden barracks of the Turks.

Seraglio-Point forms the other cape, and upon this shore lies the city of Constantinople proper—the veritable Stamboul—and never did outline more magnificent, display its undulations and indentations, between sea and sky. The land inclines to the very verge of the water, and the buildings present themselves in a perfect and superb amphitheatre. The mosques, rising above this ocean of verdure, and this wilderness of houses of all colours, display their blue domes, while their white minarets, surrounded by balconies, and terminated by a slender spire, shoot upward, sharp and bright, in the clear sky of the morning; giving to the town, an oriental and fairy physiognomy, heightened by the soft and silvery vapour which hangs about the earth and the buildings. Amidst all these minarets, behind the mosque of Bajazet, rises to a prodigious height the tower of the Seraskier, whence is displayed the signal, which indicates the outbreak and the locality of accidental fires.

Three bridges of boats connect the two shores of the Golden Horn, and permit incessant communication between the Turkish town and its variously-populated suburbs. The principal street of Galata abuts upon the first of these bridges. We will not, however, anticipate these details, which will be given hereafter in their proper places, but limit ourselves to the general aspect.

There are no quays in Constantinople, and the town everywhere plunges its feet into the water. The ships of all nations approach the houses, without being kept at a respectful distance by piers of granite.

Near the bridge which occupies the centre of the Golden Horn, are stationed the steamers of England, France, Austria, and Turkey; omnibuses of the sea, watermen of the Bosphorus, that Thames of Constantinople, where is concentrated all the activity and all the

life of the town. Myriads of boats and caiques, glide like fish amid the azure waters of the gulf, and direct their course toward the *Leonidas*, moored at a short distance from the Custom-house, which is situated between Galata and Top-Hané. In all the countries of the world, the custom-houses have columns, and an architecture in the style of the Odeon. That of Constantinople is not false to its species, but luckily the neighbouring barracks are so dilapidated, so out of the perpendicular, and shouldering each other about with a nonchalance so truly oriental, that the severe classicality of the custom-house is somewhat ameliorated.

As usual, the deck of the *Leonidas* was covered in an instant with a polyglot crowd. It was a medley of Turkish, Greek, Italian, Armenian, French, and English. I was sadly perplexed amidst this babel, although before starting I had studied Turkish "under the best masters;" when there appeared in a caique, like a guardian angel, the person to whom I was consigned and recommended, and who knew in his own proper person all the languages that ever were spoken, and seemingly some few besides. He sent to the devil (each in his own tongue), all the rascals who were devouring me, took me into his boat, and conducted me to the custom-house, where the officials contented themselves with a mere glance at my scantily stocked portmanteau, which a *hammal*, or porter, immediately afterward tossed, like a feather, across his herculean shoulders.

The *hammal* is of a species peculiar to Constantinople; a sort of camel with two legs and no hump. He lives on cucumbers and water, and carries the most enormous weights up the most perpendicular streets, under a sun literally melting.

These men carry upon their shoulders a stuffed leathern

cushion, on which they place their burdens; stooping greatly beneath the weight, and bearing the strain upon the neck, like oxen. Their dress consists of loose linen trousers, a coarse yellow jacket, and a fez, about which is wound a handkerchief. Their chests and bodies are generally well developed; but, singular as it may appear, their legs are often very slender. It is amazing to see legs, which look like two flutes in russet leather cases, sustain weights beneath which Hercules would bend.

In following the hammal, who led the way toward a lodging which had been secured for me near the principal street of Pera, I found myself bewildered in a labyrinth of streets and lanes, narrow, crooked, mean, and infamously paved; full of holes and puddles; thronged with mangy curs, and asses loaded with bricks and mortar. The lovely mirage which had enwrapped the city as seen from the sea, rapidly disappeared. The paradise was changed into a *cloaca*; the poetry turned into prose; and I could not but ask myself, sadly, how these ugly and ruinous houses could derive, from distance and perspective, aspects so seducing—a colouring so soft and luminous.

I have come from Paris in twelve days and a half, travelling with the mails; for I make it a principle in my journeys, to travel as rapidly as possible to the most distant point, in order to return at my ease; and I had promised myself to consecrate this day to a repose which I had fairly earned; but curiosity was too strong for me, and after paying the homage of a few yawns to my fatigue, I commenced my peregrinations, and plunged at hazard into the midst of the unknown town, without taking the precaution to provide myself with a compass; such having been the custom of a friend of mine, characterised by singular prudence and sagacity.

VI.

THE GOLDEN HORN.

THE lodging provided for me, occupied the first-floor of a house situated at the extremity of a street in the Frankish quarter; the only one which Europeans inhabit. This street led from the chief street of Pera to the Field of the Dead;¹ but I cannot designate it more clearly, for the simple reason, that in Constantinople the streets have no names affixed at the corners—neither Turkish, nor French—nor are the houses numbered, which fact complicates the difficulty.

In traversing this nameless maze, each person follows his own judgment, for want of better guidance; and finds his way and retraces it, by means of his own observation of local peculiarities. The “clue” of Ariadne or of Queen Eleanor, would here be of invaluable utility; but the attempt to drop crumbs of bread, and retrace your steps by their means, would be futile indeed, for the dogs would have devoured your land marks, long before you had even reached your first destination.

Speaking of dogs, my principal guide-post or beacon, by which to find my apartments during the earlier days of my sojourn, was a great hole sunken in the middle of the

¹ The character of Pera is so much more French than anything else, that this disused cemetery is best known to Europeans by its French designation of “Petit-champ des Morts;” of which, “The Little Field of the Dead,” although certainly a literal translation, and the only possible one, conveys but a clumsy equivalent.—TRANS.

highway, in which a mangy female dog, suckled a litter of some half dozen puppies, with the most entire composure and security, and with but little respect for the legs of those pedestrians who approached too closely the verge of her extempore kennel.

Some streets, however, have traditional names, derived from their proximity to some mosque or khan; and that in which my abode was situated, as I by-and-by ascertained, was called "Dervish-Sohak;" but the name being nowhere written up, serves but small purpose of guidance.

My house was of stone; a fact by no means unconsolatory, in a town so combustible as Constantinople;—and, for greater security, was furnished with an iron door and iron-plated shutters, to repel the flames and sparks in case of fire in the neighbourhood. My room was distinguished by whitewashed walls, and a painted wooden floor; and had, for furniture, a long divan, a table, and a Venetian mirror in a frame of black and gold. It communicated with a bed-room, supplied with an iron bedstead and a chest of drawers. There was about all this, nothing very oriental, as you may perceive; nevertheless, my hostess was a Smyrniote, and her niece, although dressed in a European morning wrapper, had a face of oriental paleness, illumined by a pair of dark eyes, purely Asiatic in their depth and languor of expression. A pretty Grecian girl for a servant, with a handkerchief twisted into a turban by way of head-dress, assisted by a stupid boy, formed the domestic establishment, and maintained its local colouring. The niece knew some French,—the aunt a little Italian; and by means of these two, and my suspicions of Turkish, we contrived to misunderstand each other very satisfactorily. But, Constantinople is evidently the original Babel, and the confusion of tongues has never ceased since its outbreak. The knowledge of at least four

languages, is indispensable for the commonest daily intercourse; those four being Greek, Turkish, Italian, and French; some or all of which are spoken at Pera by the very boys in the streets. At Constantinople the celebrated linguists Mezzofanti or Bowring, would be no such wonderful persons after all; and as for us Frenchmen, who know only our own language, we stand confounded amidst this prodigious linguistic facility; and find ourselves little better situated than if the gift of speech had been denied us altogether.

As I have already said, it is my habit, in strange towns, to plunge boldly into the unknown streets, like a nautical explorer; trusting to the points of the compass and dead-reckoning. Nothing is more amusing, than the "discoveries" that one makes in this manner; and it is a great satisfaction to give a mosque or a fountain its true name, by dint of your own researches and analogies, without the aid of a stupid dragoman; who would pronounce both name and history, with the tone and manner of a showman exhibiting a nest of boa-constrictors, or some "amphibious" nondescript, "which cannot live in the water and dies on the land."

Moreover, in this errant-travelling, you see things which guides never would show you; which, in fact, means all that is really worth seeing, in the countries which you visit.

With a "fez" for a hat, dressed in a closely-buttoned frock-coat, my face embrowned by the sea air, and a beard of six months' growth, I had sufficiently the air of a modernised and "reformed" Turk, to attract no attention in the streets; and I, therefore, boldly pursued my course toward "The Little Field of the Dead;" taking the precaution to observe very closely, at starting, both my house and the road which I took, so that I might not lose myself.

“The Little Field of the Dead,” which, for brevity, and to avoid the more lugubrious addition, is usually called “The Little Field,” occupies the slope of a hill which rises from the shore of the Golden Horn, to the crest of Pera, and is distinguished by a terrace bordered by lofty houses and cafés. It is an ancient Turkish cemetery, but disused for some years: perhaps, because there was a lack of room; perhaps, because the dead Mussulmans found themselves too near the living Giaours.

A blazing sun glares upon this declivity, bristling with dark-leaved and gray-trunked cypresses, beneath which rise a crowd of tombstones of marble, the summit of each of which is decorated with a carved and coloured turban. These stones lean in all directions,—right, left, backward, or forward, according to the sinking of the earth beneath and around them; and bear a vague resemblance (from their turbaned heads) to human forms, or to those children’s toys, which represent a blacksmith striking upon an anvil, with a wooden-hammer stuck in his stomach.

In many places the stones, carved with verses of the Koran, have yielded under their own weight; and being carelessly placed in a sandy soil, are overturned or broken. Some of them are decapitated, and their turbans lie at their feet like severed heads. It is said that these truncated tombs are those of the Janissaries, pursued even beyond the grave by the vengeance of the Sultan Mahmoud.

Nothing like symmetry or arrangement is discernible in this scattered cemetery; which extends, at one point, its tombs and its cypresses, between the houses of Pera, to the “Tekké,” or monastery, of the Dancing Dervishes. Here and there, rise slightly elevated plots of ground, often enclosed by low walls, or balustrades, forming the special burial-ground of some family of wealth or power.

These enclosures contain, habitually, a pillar surmounted by a superb turban, encircled by three or four leaves of marble (rounded at the top like the handle of a spoon), and a dozen of smaller pillars. This is the burial-place of some Pasha, with his wives, and those of his children who died young; forming a sort of funeral harem, to keep him company in the other world.

At different points, workmen are making door-frames, or steps for stair-cases; idlers are sleeping, or smoking their pipes, seated upon the tombs; veiled females pass, trailing their yellow boots with a careless sort of step; children are playing at hide-and-seek among the graves, and shouting merrily at their play; and the cake merchants set up their stalls, and offer you their light circular cakes, encrusted with almonds.

Among the fallen stones fowls are pecking, and cows seek some meagre shoots of herbage; while for lack of grass they chew scraps of shoes, and fragments of old hats, which are scattered around. The dogs have installed themselves in the excavations caused by the decay of the coffins, or more often of the planks which support the earth above the bodies; and have made themselves frightful hiding-places of these asylums of the dead,—enlarged by their voracity.

In the most frequented quarters, the tombs are worn beneath the feet of the passengers, and are gradually obliterated beneath the dust and other accumulations. The marble pillars are scattered in fragments upon the soil, and are rapidly being buried, like the mouldering remains which they once designated,—shrouded by those invisible grave-diggers who make everything neglected and deserted to disappear;—be it tomb, temple, or town. Here, it is not Solitude extending itself above Forgetfulness, but Life resuming the place which it had temporarily

conceded to Death. Some masses of cypress, peculiarly compact, have still saved certain corners of the cemetery from profanation, and preserved its hue of melancholy. The turtle-doves nestle in their dark foliage, and flights of smaller birds, hovering above their black cones, trace large circles upon the blue of the sky.

Some small houses of wood—built of planks, lath, and lattice-work, painted of a red which has been rendered pink by the sun and the rain—are grouped among the trees; looking worn out and dissipated, out of perpendicular, and in that state of dilapidation, most favourable to the artist.

Before descending the hill leading to the Golden Horn, I paused a moment to contemplate the superb prospect which expanded itself beneath my view. The first picture, was formed by the cemetery and its slopes, covered with cypresses and tombs;—the second, by the brown-tiled roofs, and the red houses of the quarter of Kassim Pasha; the third, by the blue waters of the gulf, which extends from Serai-Bournou to the “Sweet Waters of Europe;” and the fourth, by the line of undulating hills, upon the slope of which Constantinople lies outspread as in an amphitheatre. The blue domes of the bazaars, the white minarets of the mosques, the arches of the ancient aqueduct, the tufts of cypress and of plane trees, the angles of the roofs, varying the magnificent line of horizon, extending from the Seven Towers to the heights of Eyoub:—all this, lay before me in a pure and silvery light, and with a force of tone and clearness of outline beyond description.

After a few minutes of pensive admiration, I resume my progress; now following an obscure path, now striding over the tombs, until I come to a labyrinth of narrow streets, lined with black-looking houses, inhabited by

charcoal dealers, blacksmiths, and other ferruginous labourers. I said "houses," but the word is far too grand, and I recall it. Say huts, hovels, dog-kennels; all that you can imagine the most smoky, dirty, and miserable. Wretched little donkeys, with drooping ears and bare bones, range about, loaded with charcoal or old iron. Aged beggars, seated upon their crossed and folded legs, extended piteously towards me, from amid their rags, hands like those of unfolded mummies; while their owl's eyes, and their beaks like those of birds of prey, repelled, rather than excited compassion. Others, with curved backs, and heads leaning on their breasts, hobbled along, with their hands resting upon large canes—looking, for all the world, like the pictures of Mother Goose in the nursery tale.

It is only in the East, that it is possible to realise the fantastic extreme of ugliness, to which old women can attain, who make no attempt to conceal the ravages of time. Here, too, the veil augments the horror; for what one sees is frightful, but what that leads one to imagine, is unutterable! It is a sad pity that the Turks have no "Witches Sabbath," to celebrate which, they could send these horrible creatures, each upon her broom!

Some few hammals, bending beneath incredible weights—and, like Dante in the infernal regions, raising one foot, only when the other is firmly planted—mount and descend the streets; a few horses pass noisily along, striking innumerable sparks, at each step, from the wretched and uneven pavement, of this rather laborious than fashionable quarter.

At length, I reached the Golden Horn, where I came out upon the white buildings of the arsenal, erected above extensive vaults, and crowned by a tower and belfry. Being built, however, in accordance with civilised tastes,

it has no attraction for Europeans, although the Turks are very proud of it. I therefore give little time to its contemplation, and devote my observation rather to the harbour, crowded with ships of all nations, and rippled by caiques gliding about in every direction ; and above all, to the wonderful panorama of Constantinople itself, displayed upon the opposite shore.

This view is so strangely beautiful, that it is hard to credit its reality ; or to believe that it is anything but one of those theatrical scenes, prepared to illustrate some eastern fairy tale, and bathed, by the fancy of the painter, and the brilliancy of the gas-lights, in a radiance purely celestial. The palace of Serai-Bournou, with its Chinese roofs, its white and crenelated walls, its latticed kiosks, its gardens of cypress, pine, and plane trees ; the mosque of Sultan-Achmet, with its circular dome standing amidst the six minarets, which rise around it like masts of ivory ; the great mosque of Saint Sophia ; the mosque of Bajazet ; Yeni-Djami ; the Seraskier's Tower, an immense column, upon whose summit is always stationed a watchman to give the alarm in case of fire, and indicate its locality ; the Suleimanieh, with its Arab elegance, and its dome like a helmet of steel ; all these, displayed upon a ground of delicious blue, form a picture which seems rather like a brilliant vision, than a prosaic scene of actual life and reality.

The transparent waters of the Golden Horn, reflect these splendours in their trembling mirror, and increase the magical effect of the picture ; while the ships at anchor, and the sailing-boats skimming the wave, with their sails outspread like the wings of a bird, serve as varied and life-like accessories, in giving tone and force to the tableau, in which, as in the atmosphere of dream-land, you behold the city of Constantine and of Mahomet II.

I know, from the experience of those who have visited Constantinople before me, that these wonders have need (like the theatrical scenes which they resemble) of distance and perspective; and that, on a near approach, the charm vanishes; the palaces prove to be only dilapidated barracks; the minarets nothing but large whitewashed pillars; and the streets, steep and narrow, are utterly without character. But what matter, if this incongruous assemblage of houses, of mosques, and of trees, when painted by that peerless artist, the sun, produces a wonderful picture, lying thus between sea and sky? The scene, although the result of an illusion, is not the less truly and wonderfully beautiful.

I remained for a time on the shore, to watch the flight of the sea-gulls, and to see the caiques darting like gold-fish through the water, bearing "types" of all nations—represented by one or more specimens—forming a perpetual carnival, which seems never to pall upon the view. I had a strong desire to risk myself upon the bridge of boats which connects the two shores, and to go "*Eis tin polin*," as the Greeks say—a phrase from which the Turks, by force of constant hearing and repeating, have formed "Is-tam-boul"—the modern name of the ancient Byzantium; although some "learned Thebans" pretend that we ought to say "Islam-bol," meaning "Islam-ville"; but the passage is, for a stranger, rather too bold a feat to attempt at an advanced hour of the day, and with the chance of being overtaken by darkness before accomplishing it. I resume my road, therefore, and remount the acclivity of the cemetery, to regain Pera. In so doing, I deviated to the right, which brought me beneath the ancient Genoese walls, at the foot of which is a dried-up moat, filled with dogs asleep, and children at play; and thence, to the Tower of Galata—a lofty column,

on the summit of which, as on that of the Seraskier's Tower, is stationed, perpetually, a watchman, to give the alarm of fire.

This tower is a veritable Gothic donjon, crowned by a battlemented and projecting gallery, and surmounted by a pointed roof of brass, oxydised by time, and which, in place of the crescent, sustains the swallow-tailed weather-vane of the old feudal manor-house. At the foot of the tower, are grouped a number of hovels and dwarfed houses, which even augment its really great height. Its construction dates back to the time of the Genoese. Those merchant-soldiers made fortresses of their warehouses, and embattled their quarter like a fortified town. Their counting-houses might have withstood a siege—and so indeed they did, more than one.

At the summit of the hill which is occupied by the cemetery, is a broad road, lined on one side with houses which enjoy a splendid prospect. I followed this road to an angle, where stands a very remarkable old cypress tree, and found myself speedily opposite to my own street; tired enough, and dying of hunger.

I was supplied with a dinner, which they had obtained from a neighbouring eating-house, and which soon calmed my appetite; rather, however, by disgust, than by satisfying my hunger. I am not in the habit of writing elegies upon the culinary deceptions which I suffer in travelling; and an omelette, garnished with a few stray hairs, and rendered aromatic by a deluge of rancid butter, is a private misfortune, which I shall not attempt to elevate to the dignity of a public calamity; but I may as well record, in passing, that this first revelation of the style of Turkish cookery, seemed to me but an evil augury for the future.

Spain had habituated me to wine tasting of goat-skins

and pitch, and I resigned myself readily enough to the black wine of Tenedos, brought in a kid-skin bottle; but the water—yellow, brackish, and flavoured by the rust of the old aqueducts—made me wish for either the *gargoulettes* of Algiers, or the *alcazzaras* of Granada.

VII.

A NIGHT OF THE RAMADAN.

AT Paris, the idea of a promenade from eight to eleven o'clock at night, in Père La Chaise, or the Cemetery of Montmartre, would appear ultra-singular, and cadaverously romantic. The most courageous dandies would shrink from the experiment; and as to the ladies, the mere suggestion of such a party of pleasure, would cause them to swoon with alarm. At Constantinople, however, it attracts no notice. The Boulevard de Gand of Pera—its Regent Street—its Broadway—its Corso—is situated on the crest of the hill, which is occupied by “The Field of the Dead.”

Picture to yourself, my dear sir, and my lovely lady, that, seated, in summer, on the steps of Tortoni's, you see before you—beneath the sable gloom of clustering cypresses, and glancing white in the rays of the moon, like broken columns of silver—hundreds of monuments and of tombs; while you trifle with an ice, or sip a liqueur, and muse upon love or politics.

A slight railing, broken or overthrown in many places, indicates a faint line of separation between the burial-ground and the gay promenade; but it is disregarded at every instant. A line of chairs, and a set of tables, over which lounge a crowd of idlers, before a cup of coffee, a sherbet, or a glass of water, extends from one end to the other of the terrace; which, farther on, turns and leads

towards the "*Great Field of the Dead*," behind the hill of Pera. Some ugly houses, of six or seven storeys, line the road on one side, and rejoice in a superb view, of which they are quite unworthy. It is true, that these houses pass for the best in Constantinople, and that Pera is proud of them—judging them (rightly) as fit to figure honourably at Marseilles, or Barcelona, or even at Paris; for they are, in fact, of an ugliness the most civilised and modern. It is, however, but just to say, that, at night, vaguely illumined by the glare of torches, the rays of star-light, or the silvery beams of the moon, they assume, if only by virtue of their massive dimensions, an air sufficiently imposing.

At each end of the terrace, there is a *café-concert*, where the customers can unite with the pleasures of eating and drinking, the luxury of an orchestra of Bohemian musicians, playing German waltzes and overtures of Italian operas.

Nothing can be more gay, than this promenade, bordered with tombstones. The music, which never ceases (one orchestra beginning as another pauses), gives a festal air to this habitual assemblage of promenaders; whose friendly whisperings serve as a bass to the brazen strains of Verdi. The fumes of "*latakia*" and "*tombeki*" mount in spiral clouds of perfume from the chibouques, cigars, and narghilés—for, at Constantinople, every one smokes; even the women. All these lighted pipes sprinkle the shade with innumerable glowing sparks, like a swarm of fire-flies. The cry of "a light here!" is constantly heard, in all directions, and in every conceivable language; and the waiters precipitate themselves in the direction of these polyglot calls, brandishing a live coal in a pair of little pincers.

The inhabitants of Pera are seen in numbers, walking

amid the smokers and drinkers ; dressed in European costume, except some slight modifications about the head, and in the dress of the women. The young men are dressed like the tailors' prints of the French fashion which is just *out of date*. They are hardly distinguishable from Parisian fashionables, except by an air of "newness," somewhat too striking, in their dress. They don't *follow* the mode, but go rather in advance of it. Each part of their apparel is "signed" by some celebrated outfitter, of the Rue Richelieu, or the Rue de la Paix ; their shirts are from *chez* Lami-Housset ; their canes from *chez* Verdier ; their gloves from *chez* Jouvin, etc., etc. Some few, however—Armenian families, chiefly,—wear the red cap, with a black tassel ; but they are greatly in the minority. In fact, the East is not recalled in this scene, except by the occasional passing of some Greek, with his embroidered jacket and its hanging sleeves, and his tunic swelling out like a bell ; or by some Turkish functionary on horseback, followed by his cawas and his pipe-bearer, returning from the Great Cemetery to Istamboul, and directing his course towards the Bridge of Galata.

The Turkish manners have tinged the European manners ; and the women of Pera live closely secluded. It is, however, a voluntary seclusion. They rarely go out, except to take a turn in the Little Field, and breathe the fresh air of the evening ; and there are many who do not allow themselves even this innocent relaxation ; and thus deprive the traveller of the opportunity of passing in review the women of the country, as in the Casino, the Prado, Hyde Park, or the Champs Elysées. Man only, appears to exist in the East ; woman passes there as a myth ; and the Christians, in this particular, have caught something of the notions and habits of the Moslems.

On that particular evening, the Little Field was pecu-

liarly animated. The "Ramadan" had just commenced with the new moon, the appearance of which above the crest of the Olympus of Bithynia, anxiously watched by the priests, and proclaimed instantly throughout the empire, announces the return of the grand Mahometan jubilee.

The Ramadan, as every one knows, is a sort of Lent blended with a Carnival; the day is a *fast*, the night a *feast*; the penance is followed by a debauch, as a legitimate compensation. From sunrise to sunset—of which the precise instant is made known by a signal-gun—the Koran forbids the tasting of food or drink, or even the indulgence of the pipe; which last is a dreadful privation, to a people whose lips rarely quit the amber mouthpiece of the chibouque or narghilé. To assuage even the most agonising thirst by a draught of water, were, during the day, a grave sin; but from evening till morning everything is permitted; and the devotees then recompense themselves amply, for their previous compulsory abstinence. To-night, therefore, the Turkish part of Constantinople keeps high festival.

From the promenade of the Little Field, one beholds a wonderful spectacle. On the other side of the Golden Horn, Constantinople glows and sparkles, like the crown of carbuncles of an oriental emperor. The minarets blaze with rows of lamps from all their galleries; and from spire to spire verses of the Koran gleam in letters of flame,—seeming, in the distance, as if written upon the azure page of the firmament, by the hand of Omnipotence. Saint Sophia, Sultan-Achmet, Yeni-Djami, the Suleimanieh, and all the long line of temples of Allah which rise between Serai-Bournou and the hills of Eyoub, blaze with resplendent light, and pronounce with tongues of fire the formula of Islam. The crescent of the moon, attended by a single

star, seems to emblazon the insignia of the empire upon the unfurled standard of the sky.

The waters of the bay reflect and multiply these myriads of lights, and seem to pour a stream of molten jewels. It is said, that in a dream there is always an element or portion of reality; but here the reality surpasses the dream! The tales of the "Arabian Nights," offer nothing more magical or fairy-like; and the treasures of Haroun-al-Raschid would pale, beside this blazing and colossal casket, of a league in length!

During the Ramadan, the utmost freedom of action prevails; the use of the lantern is not compulsory, as at other times; the brilliantly illuminated streets rendering this precaution unnecessary. The Giaours can remain in Istamboul until the last light is extinguished—an experiment formerly full of danger. I, therefore, eagerly accepted the proposal of a young "Constantinoplean," to whom I was recommended, to descend to the landing-place of Top-Hané, and take a caique to go and see the Sultan on his way to prayers at Schiragan, and then finish the night in the Turkish quarter of the town.

The descent from Pera to Top-Hané, is by a narrow and almost perpendicular street, much resembling the dry channel of a torrent. To a European foot, accustomed to the elasticity of an asphalte pavement, or the smoothness of a macadamised road, such a tumble-down pathway affords but rude exercise. Still, with the assistance of my more experienced companion, I reached the bottom without breaking any bones—a happier result than could have been reasonably expected. I did not tread upon a single dog's tail, nor tumble over even one of those amiable animals.

As we descended, the crowd increased; and the shops around, brilliantly illuminated, lighted up the thorough-

fares, crowded with Turks, seated on the ground, or upon low stools, smoking with that evident zest, earned by a day of abstinence. The streets presented a perpetual coming and going; a bustle and confusion, the most animated and picturesque imaginable; for between the immoveable lines of smokers, poured an endless stream of promenaders, of all nations, sexes, and ages.

Borne on by the stream, we reached the square of Top-Hané, and traversing the court of the mosque, found ourselves in front of that charming fountain, in the Arabian style, which the English prints have made familiar to all the world; but which has been deprived of its pretty Chinese roof, to be furnished with a trashy balustrade of iron.

The bal-masqué in "Gustavus," does not exhibit a greater variety of costumes, than the great square of Top-Hané in a night of the Ramadan. The Bulgarians, with their huge overcoats and their fur-trimmed caps, seem not to have changed their dress since leaving the banks of the Danube; Circassians, with their slender limbs and expanded chests; Georgians, with short tunics bound with a ring of metal, and patent leather casques; Arnaouts, wearing embroidered jackets without sleeves, over their bare and brawny chests; Jews, distinguished by their robes open at the sides, and their black caps bound with blue handkerchiefs; Greeks of the islands, with their ample trousers, crimson sashes, and tarbouches with silken tassels; modernised Turks, with their single-breasted frock-coats, and red fez; Turks of the old style, in broad turban, and caftan of pink, yellow, or pale blue, recalling the time of the janissaries; Persians, with black lamb's-wool caps; Syrians, distinguished by their gold embroidered scarfs and gowns of Byzantine form; Turkish women, in white *yachmacks* and light coloured *feredjes*;



THE MOSQUE OF SULTAN MAHMOUD AT TOP-HANE.

Armenian females, less closely veiled, in violet dresses, and black boots ; all these, formed in groups which blend and disperse unceasingly, constitute the most novel and curious medley that can be conceived.

Stalls in full trade, selling milk curds and boiled cream ; shops of confectionery—of which the Turks are enormous consumers ; the counters of the vendors of water, distinguished by chimes of small bells, which are rung by a miniature hydraulic machine ; stalls of sherbet dealers, and of sellers of snow-water ; are ranged around the sides of the square, which is brightened by their illuminations. The shops of the tobacconists are filled with persons of some pretension, who look out upon the scene, while complacently smoking the finest tobacco, through pipes of jasmine or cherry-wood. At the farther end of the cafés the tarbouka rattles, the tambourine beats, and the shrill notes of the flute are heard ; while nasal and monotonous songs, blended from time to time with the sharp notes of the Tyroleans, rise from amid the clouds of smoke. It was with great labour and difficulty that we reached, at length, through this compact throng, the landing-place of Top-Hané, where we were to take water.

A few strokes of the oar sent us out into the stream, and we could see from the centre of the Bosphorus, the illuminations of the mosque of Sultan Mahmoud, and of the gun foundery which has given its name to the landing-place of Top-Hané. “ *Top*,” in Turkish, signifies cannon ; and “ *hané*,” a place or warehouse. The minarets of the mosque of the Sultan Mahmoud, are considered among the most graceful in Constantinople ; and are cited as specimens of the classic style of Turkish architecture.

They raised their slender proportions sharply, in the deep blue of the night, with their outlines traced in fire,

and united one to another by verses of the Koran ; producing a most graceful and striking effect. In front of the foundery, the illumination was composed of a gigantic cannon, with its carriage and wheels, forming the insignia of the Turkish artillery with striking exactitude.

In following the Bosphorus, we coasted the European shore, all blazing with light, and bordered with innumerable summer palaces of viziers and pashas ; distinguished by illuminations mounted upon iron frames, and representing complicated cyphers or monograms in the Turkish manner, blended with figures of steam-boats, bouquets, and sentences of the Koran ; until at length we reached the palace of Shiragan, composed of a triangular portico with fluted columns (in the style of the Chamber of Deputies at Paris), and two wings, trellised with windows, and resembling a couple of immense cages. The name of the Sultan, written in lines of fire, glowed upon the front ; and through the open door a large hall was visible, where amid the blaze of innumerable candelabra, dark shadows moved in pious convulsions. It was the Padischah, who performed his devotions, surrounded by his grand officers, kneeling upon the carpet. A sound of nasal psalmody issued also from the hall, combined with the yellow light of myriads of tapers, and spread itself abroad in the calm and blue of the evening.

After a few minutes of contemplation, we signed to our *caïdgi* to return, that I might see the other shore ; the shore of Asia, on which stands Scutari (the ancient Chrysopolis), with its illuminated mosques, and its screens of cypress spreading behind them the folds of their funereal foliage.

During the passage, I had occasion to admire the dexterity with which the rowers of these fragile boats (the caiques) direct their course, through the tumult of

vessels and of currents, which would render the navigation of the Bosphorus extremely dangerous to boatmen less adroit.

The caiques have no helm, and the rowers—unlike the gondoliers of Venice, who look towards the prow of their boat—turn their backs towards the quarter which they approach ; which compels them at every stroke of the oar, to turn their heads to see if any unexpected obstacle has interfered to check their progress. They have certain recognised cries, by which they announce or prevent such interruptions, with inconceivable quickness.

Seated upon a cushion, in the bottom of the caique, beside my companion, I enjoyed in silence and inaction this wonderful spectacle ; for the slightest movement, be it understood, is quite sufficient to overturn these narrow cockle-shells ; calculated as they are for Turkish gravity and immobility. The dews of the night fell upon our garments, and made the latakia steam in our chibouques ; for be the days never so hot, the nights have always a certain coolness upon the waters of the Bosphorus, freshened as they are by the sea breezes, and the displacement of air caused by the rapid currents of the estuary.

We entered the Golden Horn ; and touching at the Serai-Bournou, we disembarked amidst a fleet of caiques, (among which ours, after turning about, insinuated itself like a wedge), near a great kiosk, with Chinese roof, and walls hung with green curtains ; a former pleasure-house of the Sultan, abandoned at present, and transformed into a guard-house. It was amusing, to watch the approach of the long, gilded barges, of the pashas and high personages, for whom splendid horses waited on the quay ;—superbly caparisoned barbs, held by cawas, negroes, or Arnaouts. The crowd gave way respectfully to allow them passage.

On ordinary occasions, the streets of Constantinople are not lighted, and every one is obliged to carry a lantern, as if he were looking for somebody (or haply emulating the search made by Diogenes); but at the time of the Ramadan, nothing can be more joyously bright than these narrow streets, and these abodes of habitual darkness, along which sparkle, from point to point, paper lanterns; while the shops, open throughout the night, throw out long trains of light, which illumine the surrounding houses. On every stall is nothing but lamps, candles, and tapers; the vendors in the open air surround themselves with tapers to attract custom; groups of friends sup together beneath the lamps; the smokers, seated before the entrances of the cafés, revive with each puff the glowing tip of their chibouques or narghilés;—and among this joyous crowd the light falls in vast and variegated masses, reflected in all colours and shades, and in every possible direction.

All this multitude eat, with appetites sharpened by a fourteen hours' fast:—some eat balls of rice, or of hashed meat, wrapped in vine leaves;—others the *kebab*, rolled in a kind of pancake; and yet others, enormous cucumbers, or *carpous* of Smyrna; while those richer or more fastidious, gorge themselves with more refined meats, or with quantities of confectionery; and no small number, restrict themselves to the large white mulberries, which lie in heaps before the stalls of the fruiterers.

My friend took me into the shop of a confectioner, who is the “Véry” of Constantinople, to initiate me into the gourmandism of the Turks in respect to “sweets.” It is, in truth, carried to an extent of refinement which would hardly be credited in Paris.

This shop merits a particular description. The shutters, lifting upon hinges, like the ports of a ship, formed

a species of awning or pent-house, painted in blue and yellow, overshadowing enormous glass jars, filled with coloured sugar-plums, and crystals of *rahatlokoum* (a sort of transparent sweatmeat, made with flour and coloured sugar), pots of conserve of roses, and jars of pistachio-nuts.

We entered the "establishment," in which three persons would have found it difficult to stand, and which was, nevertheless, one of the largest in Constantinople; and the master—a big Turk, dark complexioned, black-bearded, with a mildly ferocious physiognomy—served us, in a manner amiably terrible, with some red and white *rahatlokoum*, and various sorts of exotic "sweets," highly perfumed and of exquisite flavour; although, perhaps, a little too honied for a European palate. A cup of excellent coffee served, however, by its healthful bitterness, to overcome the excessive sweetness of the confectionery, of which I had partaken somewhat freely, out of curiosity. At the farther end of the shop, some boys, with aprons tied around their waists, a cloth encircling their heads, and with naked arms, stirred, over a clear fire, the brass saucepans, in which the almonds and pistachio-nuts were habituating themselves to clothing made of sugar; or rolled, in white powder, balls of *rahatlokoum*; making no mystery whatever of their processes.

Seated on one of those low stools, which, with the divans, form the only seats used by the Turks, I watched the passage through the streets of the compact and motley crowd, sprinkled with vendors of sherbet, and criers of iced-waters, or of cakes; in which the ever-recurring Turkish functionary on horseback, preceded by his cawas, and followed by his pipe-bearer, pursued his way imperturbably, without crying "beware!"—and I could not withdraw my gaze from this scene, for me so new. In

fact, it was past one in the morning, when, guided by my companion, I took my way towards the quay where our boat awaited us.

In our route, we traversed the court of the mosque of Yeni-Djami, encircled by a gallery of antique columns, surmounted by Arabic arches of a superb style, which the moon whitened with silvery light, and softened with shadows of blue. Under these arches lay, with the composure of persons quite at home, numerous groups of beggars wrapped in their rags. Every Mussulman who has no home, can lay himself down, without fear of the patrol, upon the steps of a mosque; and he will sleep there in as perfect safety as a Spanish beggar beneath the porch of a church.

The feast lasts, at Constantinople (as already explained,) until the gun-fire announces, with the first ray of sunlight, the return of the fast; but it was time to think of rest, and we still had to effect the ascent from Top-Hané to Pera; an undertaking rather formidable, after a day of physical fatigue and mental excitement. The dogs growled somewhat as I passed,—doubtless scenting my French origin and recent arrival,—but they were speedily quieted by a few words in Turkish, from my friend, and allowed me to proceed without attacking my shins; and, thanks to him, I re-entered my lodgings safe from their hungry jaws.

VIII.

THE CAFÉS.

THE "Turkish Café," on the Boulevard du Temple, at Paris, has sadly deluded the imaginations of the Parisians, as to the luxury of the real oriental cafés. Constantinople is far from approaching the magnificence of the arches, the columns, the mirrors, and the ostrich eggs of the Parisian building. In fact, nothing can be more simple than a Turkish café, in Turkey.

I will describe one which passes for perhaps the finest, but which, however, recalls in nothing the luxury of eastern fables. You seek in vain for the panels of enamelled porcelain, the stucco-lace, the bee-hive arches, the green, red, and gold of the halls of the Alhambra, celebrated by the illuminated prints of Girault de Prangey. Many of the establishments for the sale of Dutch-broth, at Paris, are quite as splendid as the cafés of Constantinople.

Imagine a saloon of a dozen feet square, arched and whitewashed, encircled by a wainscot about six feet high, and a species of divan, covered with straw matting. In the middle—and this is the most elegant point of detail—a fountain of white marble throws up a stream of water, which falls again in various streams, and clouds of spray. In a corner, burns a furnace; over which the coffee is made, cup by cup, as required, in little brass coffee-pots, capable of holding but a single cup each.

To the walls are attached shelves, laden with razors,

near which hang several elegant little pearl-mounted mirrors, in which the customers can see whether their beards are arranged to their taste; for, in Turkey, every café is also a barber's shop; and, while I smoke my *chibouque* and sip my coffee, in comes a fat Turk, with a parrot's nose, and a lean Persian, with an eagle's beak, to have their beards dressed; while a young Greek, in front of me, is pomading his moustache, and painting his eyebrows, which he has first equalised by means of a small pair of pincers.

The idea is prevalent, that, according to the rule of the Koran, the Turks absolutely proscribe all "images," and regard the products of the plastic arts as works of idolatry; but, although this is true in principle, it is not rigorously sustained; and the cafés are decorated with all sorts of prints, of the oddest choice and taste, without appearing at all to scandalise the orthodox Mussulman.

The Café of the Fountain, among others, has quite a gallery of prints; and so grotesquely characteristic, that I cannot forbear to name a few of them:—The Turban of a Dervish,—A Santon taming a red Lion,—Animals, by Victor Adam,—Warriors of Khorassan, with ferocious moustachios and scimitars, and mounted upon horses who seem to have six legs each,—Napoleon at the Battle of Ratisbon,—The Young Spanish Girl,—Turkish Ships and Caiques,—Combat between twenty-two Frenchmen and two hundred Arabs,—Emperor of Russia and his august Family,—Battle of Austerlitz,—President of the United States,—Old Parr,—Daniel Lambert,—The Balloon of Tomaski,—A Lion,—A Goat,—A View of the Arsenal and Mosques, etc., etc. All these, in frames worth about a penny each!

This extraordinary *melange* occurs in all the cafés, with slight variations of subject. Turkish taste takes the French

prints, and forms these grotesque combinations. Sirens swim at the side of steam-boats, and the heroes of Schah-Nameh brandish their battle-axes above the old soldiers of the Empire.

It is delightful, to take, in these cafés, after a fatiguing walk through the streets, a tiny cup of their dark and turbid coffee, brought to you by a black-eyed youngster, on the tips of his fingers, in a salver of silver filigree; and it proves more truly refreshing than any iced drink which you could obtain. To the cup of coffee, is usually added a glass of pure water; which the Turks drink before, and the Franks after; and there is a characteristic anecdote current on this very subject.

A European, who spoke the eastern languages perfectly, wore the Mussulman costume like a native, and had even acquired the bronzed complexion of the climate, was, nevertheless, recognised as a Frank, in a little, obscure, Syrian café, by a ragged Bedouin, incapable, certainly, of discovering a fault in the pure Arabic dialect of the detected foreigner. "By what have you discovered me to be a Frank?" said the European; as much annoyed as Theophrastus, when called "stranger," by a greengrocer in the market at Athens, because he had misplaced an accent. "You drank your water *after* your coffee;" replied the Bedouin.

Every one carries his own tobacco in a box; the café supplying only the chibouque—the amber mouth-piece of which is incapable of retaining any impurity from use—and the narghilé—a complicated apparatus, which it would be rather difficult to lug about with you. The price of the cup of coffee is twenty paras, or about one penny farthing; and if you give a piastre, or twopence halfpenny, you are quite a magnificent person. The money is dropped into a box, pierced with a hole (a

regular child's money-box), which is placed near the door.

Although, in Turkey, the first beggar in rags, who comes in, seats himself on the divan beside the most sumptuously-dressed Turk, without eliciting any sign of aversion or displeasure from the latter, certain classes have, nevertheless, their habitual places of resort; and the "Café of the Marble Fountain," situated between Serai-Bournou and the mosque of Yeni-Djami, is one of the most frequented in all the town.

A charming little circumstance, purely local and oriental, gives a poetic tinge to this café, in the eyes of a European.

The swallows have made their nests in the arch of the ceiling; and, as the front is always open, they dash in and out again, with that peculiar "swoop" which characterises them; bringing food to their young, and chirping as they pass, without showing the least fear of the inmates, whose spiral columns of smoke they often disturb, and even against whose fez, or turban, they often graze their wings. The younglings, with their heads peeping over the brink of the nests, gaze curiously, but tranquilly, upon the customers who come and go; or are lulled to sleep by the gush of the fountain, or the bubbling of the narghilés.

It is a very pretty sight, to witness this fearless confidence in man, on the part of the birds, and to see these nests actually within this crowded café; but it is known that the Orientals, however cruel, sometimes, to man, are exceedingly gentle to animals, and have the faculty of winning their affection, and inducing them to approach, habitually and voluntarily. But, then, they never disturb the animals—as the Europeans do, by their noisy restlessness, and their uproarious laughter. The Turks, governed

by the principle of fatalism, have much of the passive immobility of the animals themselves.

Near Tekké—the monastery of the dervishes, adjoining Pera—and facing the prolonged cemetery of the Little Field of the Dead, there is a café, frequented chiefly by Franks and Armenians. It consists of a large, square room, wainscoted half way up with white and yellow, surrounded by a tapestried divan, and ornamented by mirrors, in black or gold frames, sustained by cords with golden tassels; and also decorated with little brazen hands, holding napkins or towels—for this café, like all of its species in Constantinople, is combined with the barber's shop. On a shelf, at one end, are ranged narghilés, in cut glass, or Bohemian glass, or Damascened steel; catching and reflecting the light from their angular surfaces, and enfolded, like so many Laocoons, by their flexile and snake-like tubes of morocco. Near the narghilés are ranged, like shields upon the bulwarks of an antique galley, large brass basins, in which the barber lathers the *heads* of his customers. On the bench, beside the door, you sit dreamily, and watch the passage of the merchants who go towards their counting-houses, at Galata; or gaze upon the dilapidated tombs, which, from their desecrated enclosures, overhang the public road, and retain little of their sepulchral aspect, except what they borrow from the sable gloom of the overshadowing cypresses.

The Café of Beschik-Tasch, on the European shore of the Bosphorus, is rather more picturesque in its construction. It resembles those cabins upon piles, from which fishermen watch the passage of the shoals of fish. It is shaded by tufts of trees, and built of planks and trellis-work, raised upon timbers; and is bathed by the rapid current of the Bosphorus, and refreshed by the breezes from the Black Sea. Seen at a distance, the effect is

graceful—especially at night, when its lamps throw long trains of light upon the waters. A perpetual tumult of caiques, seeking to land or embark their passengers, gives animation to this aërial café, recalling, although with rather more of elegance, those which overhang the Gulf of Smyrna.

To close this “monography” of Constantinople caféism, we will refer to one more, which is situated near the landing-place of Yeni-Djami, and rarely frequented by any but the sailors. The lighting of it is original enough, consisting of glasses filled with oil, in which burns a wick, and which are hung from the ceiling by wires twisted into a spiral shape, like the springs of a child’s wooden cannon. The *cawadgi* (master of the café) touches the glasses from time to time, and they, by means of the spiral wire, rise and fall, executing a sort of pyrotechnic ballet, to the great delight of the spectators, who are so placed as to be beyond the fear of occasional grease-spots. A lustre, composed of iron wire, representing a vessel, and supplied with lights to indicate her outline, completes this strange illumination, and renders a delicate compliment to the profession of the habitual customers of the café.

On observing the entrance of a Frank, the *cawadgi*, to do him honour, gave a furious impulse to his lamps, and the glasses began to dance like jack-o’-lanterns; while the nautical “lustre” heaved and rolled, like a galleon in a hurricane; shedding around, meanwhile, an exquisite dew of rancid oil.

The frequenters of this café would offer superb oriental models to the artist. The fluctuating light, and savage figures, seem more befitting some wild mountain gorge, than the interior of a peaceful café; but yet these seemingly-ferocious beings sip their coffee, and surrender themselves to the indolent luxury of the *kief*, with a

placidity astonishing in mortals so characteristic, and so worthy, in appearance, to serve as originals for the bandits of Salvator Rosa or Adrian Guignet.

Nearly all these sailors had their arms tattooed with red and blue. The most brutalised of the human race seem to know, by instinct, that the use of ornament traces an impassable line between man and the animals—and when they cannot embroider their clothing, they embroider their skin. Upon these brawny arms, with the muscles of athletes, I saw the talismanic *Mach' Allah*, which preserves from the “evil eye”—so much dreaded in the East; burning hearts, transfixed with arrows, precisely like those upon the valentines which fond housemaids send to their lovers; verses of the Koran, and pious souvenirs of the pilgrimage to Mecca, interlaced with flowers, anchors, and oars; and steamboats, with wheels and all complete—even to a corkscrew imitation of the smoke from their funnels.

I remarked, particularly, one stout fellow, somewhat more elegantly shabby than the rest; whose arms, bare to the shoulder, exposed to view, in a frame of arabesques—on the right side, a young Turk, in frock-coat and fez, holding in his hand a pot of basil; and, on the left, a dancing-girl, in a strikingly brief petticoat, who seemed to pause in the midst of a cabriole, to receive the flowery homage of the gallant. This master-piece of tattooing alluded, no doubt, to some incident of gallantry, of which the prudent sailor had written the record upon his arm, in case it should be effaced from his heart.

Two ferocious-looking fellows most politely made room for me on the straw-covered divan; and the coffee which I obtained there was certainly better than the black decoction of the best cafés of Paris. The absence of the habit of drunkenness, enables one to associate with

the lowest classes in the East; and, as we have before observed, the Orientals have a natural dignity, unknown among us Europeans.

Imagine a Turk, going in the evening to one of our waterside and third-rate cafés. Of what remarks, and impertinent curiosity, would he not be the object! This was my position here; and yet no one appeared even to notice me, and still less to offer me the slightest shadow of annoyance. It is true, that the only drink for sale was the water, hawked about the room by some little Greek boys, repeating in a monotonous whine, *Crionero! crionero!* (iced water;) whereas, in a French tavern, they drink wine and brandy, and get tipsy from excess of civilisation.

Such are, with very slight variations, the Turkish cafés; which it will, therefore, be seen, bear little resemblance to the idea formed of them in France and England. They are often enlivened by troops of itinerant musicians, playing various instruments, and singing songs utterly incomprehensible to European ears; but to which the Orientals listen for hours at a time. I shall have occasion to refer again to these musicians; who, if not harmonious, are certainly picturesque.

IX.

THE SHOPS.

THE oriental shops are very different affairs from those of Europe. In fact they are only "stalls," to begin with, or a sort of alcove in a wall; and are closed at night, by shutters, which hang upon hinges and let down like the ports of a ship. The shopkeeper, seated, cross-legged, upon a bit of matting, or of Smyrna carpet, carelessly smokes his pipe, or plays with his beads; retaining the same position for hours, and appearing perfectly indifferent in regard to custom. The purchasers stand always outside, in the street; examining the goods exposed at the front of the stall, with a purely business-like air. The art of displaying merchandise to advantage—carried to such perfection in Paris and London—is quite unknown, or utterly disdained, in Turkey. Nothing reminds you, in even the finest streets of Constantinople, of the magnificent shops and windows, of the Rue Vivienne, or the Strand.¹

Smoking is a necessary of existence to the Turk; one could almost fancy it a part of his religion; and naturally, therefore, the shops of tobacconists and of vendors of chibouques and amber mouth-pieces abound everywhere.

¹ The author evidently knows less of London than of Constantinople; as, otherwise, he would probably have named Regent Street, rather than "the Strand," in this connexion.—TRANS.

The tobacco, cut very fine, and disposed in long, silky tufts, of a pale tint, is laid in masses upon shelves, and arranged with reference to its price and quality. The principal qualities are four in number: namely, *iavach* (sweet), *orta* (medium), *dokan-akleu* (piquant), and *sert* (strong); and are sold at from eighteen to twenty piastres (from 3s. 6d. to 4s. English) for an *ocque*;—a quantity equivalent to about two pounds and a half. These tobaccos, of graduated strength, are smoked in chibouques, or rolled into cigarettes; the use of which last is beginning to be very general in Turkey.

The *tombeki*, a tobacco destined exclusively for the narghilé, comes from Persia. It is not cut like the other, but pressed, and broken in small morsels. It is of a darker colour than the other kinds, and so strong, that it cannot be smoked until after two or three washings; and as it is liable to scatter, it is kept in glass-jars, like a drug. Without *tombeki*, the narghilé cannot be smoked; and it is vexatious that this tobacco is very difficult to procure in Europe; because nothing is more delicious, or more favourable to poetic reverie, than to inhale, in gentle puffs, while seated upon the cushions of a divan, this perfumed smoke, freshened by the water through which it passes; and which reaches you, after traversing a large circle of tubing, in which you entwine your arm, like an Arab snake-charmer playing with his serpents. It is the sybaritism of smoking, carried to the highest degree of perfection. Art itself contributes to the luxury of this delicate enjoyment; for there are narghilés of gold, of silver, and of cut-steel; moulded, carved, or engraved, with wonderful skill, and in forms as elegant as those of the purest antique vases; while garnets, turquoises, corals, and other stones even more precious, are employed to ornament them; so that one may smoke perfumed tobacco

through a masterpiece of art; and I see nothing, that even the most fastidious and aristocratic of duchesses could object to this "time-killer," which procures for sultans themselves, the prolonged luxury of the kief (*siesta*), and a happy forgetfulness of the world, beside their fountains of marble, and beneath the trellis-work and vines of their kiosks.

The tobacconists of Constantinople are styled *tutungis*. They are, mostly, Greeks or Armenians, and have singularly engaging manners; and sometimes—especially during the nights of Ramadan—viziers, pashas, beys, and other dignitaries, lounge familiarly in their shops, to smoke, talk, and learn the news; sitting, the while, upon low stools, or the surrounding bales of tobacco, like members of the English Parliament upon their "wool-sacks."¹

It is a strange thing, that tobacco, now in such universal use throughout the East, has been the subject of the severest interdiction on the part of many former sultans. More than one Turk, has paid with his life for the luxury of smoking; and the ferocious Amurat IV., more than once made the head of the smoker fall with his pipe. Coffee, also, has had its not less sanguinary process of introduction at Constantinople; and has no less been honoured by its fanatics and martyrs.

In the modern Byzantium, they now bestow the utmost care upon, and strain to the utmost point of luxury, all that concerns the pipe; *the* pleasure, above all others, of the modern Turk. The shops of the sellers of mouth-

¹ The assured knowledge of the matter, with which our author makes these laughable mistakes on English subjects, is such, that one cannot forbear to give them as they occur in the original. We may, however, be allowed to hope, since he describes all that he *has* actually *seen*, with such undoubted power, that "when he next doth ride abroad," he may extend his travels to England, and that we "may be there to see."—TRANS.

pieces and stems of pipes, are very numerous and well-appointed. The most valued stems, are those of cherry-wood or jasmine; and they attain to very high prices, in proportion to their size, straightness, and perfection of quality.

A fine pipe-stem of cherry, with its bark unbroken, and of a dark lustre; or a shoot of jasmine, of which the knots are regularly distributed and of a bright colour, will command as much as five hundred piastres; or nearly five pounds.

I made some rather prolonged stoppages, in front of the shop of one of these pipe-stem merchants, in the street which descends to Top-Hané, in front of the cemetery. The shopkeeper was an old man, with a superb gray beard, dark eyes, and aquiline nose. From the arm-hole of his waistcoat issued a thin, yellow arm, working a sort of bow, as if he had been playing a violin. Upon an iron drill, or gimblet, set in motion by this "bow," a pipe-stem of cherry was turning with wonderful rapidity, while undergoing the delicate operation of being bored, to serve its destined purpose. Near the old man, a young one (seemingly his son) was at work upon stems of lesser value; and a family of young cats played merrily in the sun, rolling themselves in the dust which fell from the pipe-stems. The wood not yet manufactured, and the stems already finished, lay stored in the shade, at the farther end of the shop; and the whole formed a picture of the true oriental stamp, which were worthy of any artist; but which might be found, with slight variations, framed at every street corner in Constantinople.

The manufactories of pipe-bowls, are recognisable by the quantity of red dust sprinkled about them. An infinity of bowls of yellow-clay (which becomes a deep pink by baking), await, ranged upon shelves, their turn

for entrance to the oven. These bowls, of an exceedingly fine and soft material, upon which the potter imprints various ornamental designs, are not blacked, like the French pipes; and when completed, are sold at amazingly low prices. The quantity of them consumed, is incredible.

As to the amber mouth-pieces, they are the object of a trade of their own; and which approaches to that of jewelry, by the value of the material and the expense incurred in working it. The amber comes chiefly from the Baltic; on the shore of which it is found more abundantly than any where else. At Constantinople, where it is very dear, the Turks prefer it of a pale lemon colour, partly opaque; and desire that it should have neither spot, nor flaw, nor vein; conditions somewhat difficult to combine, and which greatly enhance the price of the mouth-pieces. A perfect pair of them command as much as eight or ten thousand piastres:—from £70 to £90.

A collection of pipes worth 150,000 francs (£6,000), is not at all an unusual thing among the high dignitaries, or the richer private persons, in Istamboul. These precious mouth-pieces are encircled with rings of gold, enamelled, and often enriched with diamonds or rubies. It is, in fact, an oriental mode of displaying the possession of wealth. All these pieces of amber—yellow, pale, or clouded, and of different degrees of transparency, polished, turned, and hollowed with the utmost care—acquire, in the rays of the sun, shades of colour so warm and golden, as would make Titian jealous, and inculcate with the desire of smoking, the most resolute victim of “tobacco-phobia.” In the humbler shops, cheaper mouth-pieces are to be found, having some almost imperceptible flaw or fault; but not the less perfectly

performing their office, or being the less cool and pleasant to the lips.

There are imitations of amber, in Bohemian glass, of which enormous quantities are sold, at paltry prices ; but they are used only by the Armenians and Greeks of the lowest class. No Turk who has any self-respect, uses anything but the pure amber.

I hope, that my fair readers will forgive all these details about pipes and tobacco, which, as a traveller, I can hardly forbear to give ; for Constantinople is enveloped in a perpetual cloud of tobacco smoke, as dense as the vapour in which Homer makes his deities enwrap themselves.

This purposeless lounging about streets, has infected my pen ; and there has been a want of change, I confess. Pray look, therefore, upon these characteristic details (habitually neglected by travellers), as on beads of different colours strung upon one thread, with somewhat too little regard to harmony, but yet, not without a certain value, and possessing much local significance.

The Turks, who eat with their fingers, in default of knives and forks, are of course deficient in table plate and cutlery ; with the exception of some few persons, who have travelled in France or England, and brought home those articles of luxury ; which are still, however, almost unknown in the East, and which even those who have them, never use except before strangers and as a proof of civilisation. But there are articles of food, such as the *yaourth*, the *kaimak*, and various kinds of preserved fruits, which cannot be handled with the fingers ; and they therefore use exceedingly pretty spoons of tortoise-shell or box-wood, elaborately and exquisitely carved, to serve the purpose of the missing silver plate. I saw, in a shop, a service of this kind, consisting of a large spoon, and six smaller ones, fitting the one within the other, and all

executed with a most beautiful finish of workmanship and originality of model.

The handle of the large spoon was decorated with arabesques most elaborately carved, and of a surpassing delicacy of execution, unsurpassed by the finest Chinese carvings in ivory; while the smaller spoons had different designs, not less delicately executed. European silversmiths, in want of new models of form or design, might advantageously imitate these spoons, in silver or silver-gilt; and they would adorn the most magnificent tables.

In the street which coasts the Golden Horn, between the old and new bridges, are the marble-cutters' yards, where they make the turban-headed tombstones, which crowd—like white phantoms, just issued from their graves—the numerous cemeteries of Constantinople. There is a perpetual clatter of mallets and chisels; a cloud of sparkling dust, like snow which will not melt, sprinkles all that quarter of the streets. The “illuminators,” surrounded with pots of colours, tint the spots whence are to spring, in letters of gold or vermillion, the names of the deceased, accompanied by a verse of the Koran, or a wreath of flowers or vine-leaves, or of grapes; which last are peculiar to the tombs of the women, being regarded as emblems of gentleness, grace, and fruitfulness.

There, also, they manufacture the marble reservoirs and ornaments of the fountains destined to decorate and refresh the streets, the houses, or the kiosks; or to facilitate the frequent ablutions inculcated by the Mohammedan creed, which raises cleanliness to the rank of a virtue; differing in that respect from Catholicism, which often treats dirt and neglect as sanctity; carrying this sometimes to such an extent, that formerly, in Spain, persons who made frequent use of the bath were suspected of heresy, and regarded rather as Moors than Christians.

This funereal avocation—the manufacture of tombstones—does not appear to sadden those who practise it; and they chisel away at their lugubrious marbles, in the jolliest manner possible. In Turkey, indeed, it constantly strikes a European, that the idea of death seems to alarm nobody, and does not awaken the slightest sentiment of melancholy. They are, no doubt, familiarised with it; and the close vicinity of the cemeteries, blending everywhere the city of the dead with that of the living, instead of being placed, like ours, outside of our towns and in solitary localities, robs it of much of its terror and mystery.

Beside these tomb manufactories, always in operation, where you may at any time order your monument, with a certainty of being supplied on the instant; and where there is never a lack of business—death being the most regular of customers—life throngs, bustles, and laughs noisily. The vendors of eatables display their goods; consisting chiefly of white cheese, which closely resembles greasy plaster; of barrels of black olives; little casks of Russian *caviar*; heaps of cucumbers and tomatoes; and quarters of meat, around which linger crowds of hungry dogs. A little farther on, the fish-market asserts its presence, by its saline and piscatorial odours; and is, moreover, made conspicuous, by being decorated with the preserved carcasses or shells, of every inconceivable sea-monster that could be found. Polypuses, sea-serpents, sea-scorpions, and innumerable nameless deformities, are here exposed to view, which Nature evidently never designed to be so exhibited, but had prudently hidden in the dark green depths of the ocean.

There is a sort of sword-fish eaten at Constantinople, of a peculiarly formidable aspect. They are six or eight feet in length, and are cut into slices for sale. Their dissevered

heads are lighted by a large eye, green and fiery, which seems still to menace you with its sword, which is strong, blue, and hard, like tempered steel. Nothing could seem more strange than their long nose, from which protrudes this formidable sword ; and it forms altogether a very odd countenance for a respectable fish. When I went through the fish-market, there were four of these gigantic creatures, on four different stalls, all facing each other ; and, with these brandished weapons, looking like so many submarine ruffians, challenging each other to combat.

The absence of females in the shops at Constantinople, is, of course, very striking to a stranger. The Mussulman jealousy yields little to the necessities of trade ; and they still keep closely secluded, the sex which they are accustomed habitually to distrust. Many little details of duty, in both houses and shops, performed in Europe invariably by females, are discharged in Turkey by athletic fellows, with portentous beards ; the unfitness of whom for such tasks is grotesquely obvious.

But if the women are not allowed to *sell*, they revenge themselves by *buying* ; and one sees them in the shops, in groups of two or three, followed by negresses, who carry sacks, and to whom the ladies hand their purchases, as Judith passed the head of Holofernes to her black servant.

“ Shopping ” seems as much an amusement of the Turkish ladies as of the English ; and is, with the former, a means of passing the time, and exchanging a few words with other human beings, which few of them deny themselves.

X.

THE BAZAARS.

FOLLOWING the crooked streets which lead from the landing-place of Yeni-Djami, to the mosque of Sultan Bajazet, you reach the Egyptian, or Drug Bazaar; an immense building or market, traversed from end to end by a sort of street or roadway, intended to facilitate the passage of customers and of merchandize. A penetrating odour, derived from the innumerable aromatic drugs here collected, assails your nostrils as you approach, and is almost intoxicating in its strength.

Here are exposed in heaps, or in open sacks, henna, antimony, sandal-wood, dye-stuffs, dates, benzoin, pistachio-nuts, mastic, ginger, nutmegs, opium, hachich, and many other articles of similar character; all under the care of merchants who sit cross-legged in a most indifferent attitude, and look as if they were too much overpowered by this perfumed atmosphere, to trouble themselves about anything.

The Grand Bazaar—to retain the name given to it by Europeans, although it is more properly styled “Bezestín”—covers an immense surface, and is in itself a city within a city, with streets, lanes, passages, squares, fountains, etc.; all forming an inextricable labyrinth, where it is difficult to find your way, and still more so to retrace it, even after numerous visits. This vast space is overarched, and the

day is admitted through small cupolas, which dot the flat roof of this immense pile, and shed a soft and dim light around, which is much more favourable to the merchants than to the purchasers. I am sorry to disturb the vision of oriental magnificence, called up by the words "Great Bazaar of Constantinople;" but I can compare its reality to nothing, so accurately, as to "The Temple," at Paris; which it very greatly resembles in arrangement and style, although, of course, very much more spacious.¹

I entered, through an arcade of no particular architectural character, and found myself in a little street, especially devoted to the perfumers. It is there that they sell those exquisite essences of jasmin and bergamot; the little flasks of *atar-gul* (otto of roses), in cases of embroidered velvet; rose-water; depilatory powders; endless varieties of cosmetics; little bags of musk; rosaries of ivory, bloodstone, amber, rose and sandal-wood; Persian mirrors, framed with exquisite paintings; enormous square combs, with large teeth; and, in short, the whole arsenal of Turkish coquetry. In front of the shops, are collected innumerable groups of women, whose *feredjés* of apple-green, sky-blue, or pink; *yachmacks*, carefully closed; and yellow morocco boots, indicate "Moslem," in every shade and fold. Many of them lead by the hand pretty children, in embroidered jackets of red or green, and Mameluke trousers of cherry-coloured silk; while negroes, dressed in blue or white, and ranged behind their mistresses, complete the picturesque effect of the group. Occasionally, also, a black eunuch, recognisable by his short chest, long legs, and narrow shoulders,

¹ Most readers know "The Temple" (if in no other way), by Eugène Sue's description, in the "Mysteries of Paris." It is a vast assemblage of second-hand dealers in furniture, clothing, etc., and has no element of the magnificent, except size.—TRANS.

watches, with a morose air, the little troop entrusted to his charge; and, to obtain passage for them through the crowd, waves a *courbach*, or whip, of hippopotamus skin, which is the distinctive mark of his station and authority. The merchant, leaning on his elbow, responds carelessly to the thousand questions, heaped one upon another by the women; who “forage” among his goods, and turn the whole establishment topsy-turvy; questioning and talking at cross-purposes; asking prices, without waiting an answer; and keeping up an incessant volley of laughter all the time.

Behind these street-stalls, there are shops, to which you mount by two or three flights of stairs; and where articles of great value are stored in drawers and chests, which are opened only for purchasers who are in earnest; or who, as the English say, “mean business.” In these less public shops, are found beautiful striped scarfs, from Tunis; Persian shawls and carpets, so exquisitely embroidered, as to be scarcely distinguished from cashmeres; mirrors, inlaid with mother-of-pearl; low stands, or stools, richly carved or inlaid, on which to place salvers of sherbet; desks, for the reading of the Koran; perfume-censers, of gold, or silver, or engraved and enamelled brass; little hands, of ivory or tortoise-shell, for scratching one’s back; the bells of narghilés, in Khorassan steel; China or Japan cups; and innumerable other nicknackeries of oriental taste or fantasy.

The principal street of the bazaar is intersected and overarched by arcades, composed of stones alternately black and white; and the ceiling is decorated with half-effaced daubs in the Turkish rococo style, which approaches more nearly than would be supposed to the fashion of ornament in use in the time of Louis XV. This street abuts upon a crossway, where stands a foun-

tain, the water of which serves for the ablutions of the Moslemah ; for the Turk never forgets his religious duties, but will, when the hour of prayer arrives, break off unhesitatingly in the very midst of a bargain, leaving the buyer in suspense, while he kneels down upon his carpet, with his face turned towards the East (towards Mecca), and says his prayers, with as much devotion as if he were beneath the dome of Saint Sophia, or of Sultan-Achmet.

One of the shops most frequented by strangers, is that of "Ludovic," an Armenian, who speaks French fluently, and with exemplary patience allows you to turn and tumble over every article of his curious stock. I have made some long visits to his shop, and tasted his excellent Mocha coffee, out of little China cups, served upon tiny salvers of gold filigree, after the old Turkish fashion. Rembrandt would have found, in this shop, abundant material for enriching his museum of antiquities. Antique arms, ancient stuffs, curious articles in gold and silver, porcelain vases, and innumerable other articles, of ancient fashion and almost unknown uses. The picturesque "East" of half a century since, seems to have thrown off its robes in Ludovic's shop, when it was forced to reclothe itself in the absurd costume of "the reform;" which becomes the Turk, as the livery of a Lord Mayor's footman would become a wild Indian.

Upon a low table are displayed yataghans, poignards with chased silver scabbards, or sheaths of velvet, shagreen, morocco, or wood, and handles of agate or ivory, or encrusted with garnets, coral, or turquoise—long, short, broad, narrow, straight, crooked, and of every conceivable variety of form and of date, from the Damascus blade of the Pasha, inlaid with verses of the Koran, in letters of gold, to the coarse sheath-knife of the camel-

driver. How many Zebecques and Arnaouts, Beys and Effendis, Omrahs and Rayahs, must have robbed their belts, to form this costly and singular arsenal and armoury !

Upon the walls are hung Circassian casques and coats of mail ; shields of tortoise-shell, of hippopotamus' hide, of inlaid steel with bosses of brass ; long guns, engraved, inlaid, and jewelled ; and arms of the present day, intermixed with those of the middle ages.

The drawers and closets are heaped with Broussa silks, glistening like water in the moonlight, with their silvery tissue ; slippers, embroidered handkerchiefs, Indian and Persian cashmeres. Emirs' pelisses of green, dolmans stiff with gold—all the luxuries of fable, all the chimerical riches of the "Arabian Nights," are heaped together in the narrow compass of Ludovic's shop ; and he allows you to examine and handle them, until you begin to fancy the oriental tales of childhood to be no exaggerations, and that you see before you the jacket of Prince Caramalzaman, and the very dress worn by the Princess Boudroulboudour.

Chaplets of amber, ebony, and sandal-wood ; scent-boxes of gold ; fans made of the plumage of peacocks, or the argus pheasant ; bells of *hookas*, carved or inlaid with silver. Amid all these articles of Turkish luxury, you find, unexpectedly, a piece of Sevres porcelain, or of crockery from Vincennes, or a bit of enamel from Limoges ; arrived there, no one knows how. Between two splendid helmets from Kurdistan, with mailed gorgets like those of the Crusaders, I saw one of those black and pointed Prussian helmets, now in use in that country, and which resemble nothing so much as an English coal-scuttle, with a short poker stuck through its centre.

Anything on earth, that you could possibly desire, you might reasonably count upon finding among Ludovic's

stores ; be it the stew-pot of the janissaries, the battle-axe of Mahomet II., or the saddle of Al Borak.

Each street of the Bezestín is devoted to some particular trade. Here are sellers of babouches, slippers, and women's boots ; and nothing can be droller than the shelves, full of extravagant forms of slippers, in leather, morocco, velvet, or brocade, and ornamented in every conceivable manner ; besides being of a shape and style utterly unsuited to any European foot. The children's shoes afford opportunity for the prettiest possible caprices of form and ornament. In the street, the women wear laced boots of yellow morocco, of which I have already spoken ; for the elegant and costly slippers in which they indulge, would be in a moment engulfed and lost, in the muddy and glutinous streets of Constantinople.

In another quarter are collected the sellers of *caftans*, *gandouras*, and dressing-gowns of Broussa silk. Those articles are moderate in price, although the colours are superb, and the fabric exceedingly soft and fine. These dealers have also a stuff, manufactured at Broussa, and used for dresses, waistcoats, and trousers, of which one half is silk, and the other cotton ; and which is a recent manufacture, encouraged by the present Sultan.

The drapers display English fabrics of glaring colours, the borders of which are decorated with great letters, or armorial blazons, in gold or brass thread, to flatter the eastern fancy. It is an exemplification of the perfection of mechanism to which Great Britain has attained, coupled with that falsity of taste peculiar to the English. I confess that such absurd grotesqueries make me grate my teeth, and wish to send to all the devils, the industry, the commerce, and the civilisation, which can produce a red so furious, a blue so savage, such an impudent yellow ; and which, for some unknown gain, can produce colours

and combinations so atrocious, and so hostile to the harmony of tone that belongs to eastern taste; which, gorgeous as it may be, is not tawdry. When I reflect that I am probably doomed to meet these horrible stuffs—cut into jackets, vests, or caftans—in a mosque, a street, or a landscape, I experience an inward fury, which bids me wish that the sea would engulf the ships which import these abominations; that fire would destroy the factories where they are made; and that England itself would disappear in its own fogs! I must, however, say almost as much in detestation of the execrable cotton fabrics of Rouen and Roubaix, which begin to spread over the East their frightful little bouquets, their atrocious garlands, and their dirty spotted patterns; which last greatly resemble masses of crushed bugs!

If I speak of this with bitterness, it is because it has caused me such genuine annoyance, to see three young Turkish girls—perhaps, eighteen years of age, beautiful as houris, and indeed far more so, since houris do not exist—wearing, over dresses of Rouen calicoes, caftans of this diabolical English fabric. The rays of the sun, although attracted by their charming faces, refused to light up these monstrosities, and recoiled from them with disgust.

Happily, one is relieved from these horrible contemplations, by the display of children's clothing; consisting of little jackets, embroidered with gold and silver; tiny trousers of silk; little caftans, with pockets; and tarbouches, ornamented with crescents: in short, the East in miniature, in the prettiest form conceivable.

Then come, in a street reserved to themselves, the gold and silver wire-drawers, who make the thread of silver and gold, with which the Turkish caps, slippers, jackets, etc., are so exquisitely embroidered. There, also, are made those elegant cords and braids, which they apply

to garments with a grace that our *passementerie* vainly seeks to imitate. The Turks do all these things by hand; using the great toe of the bare foot, as the point to which they fasten their work.

In the richer jewellers' shops, there are masses of precious stones, enclosed in coffers which they keep constantly under their eyes, or which are placed within wire-work enclosures; and in many of these obscure shops (more resembling cobblers' stalls than anything else) incredible riches are accumulated. Diamonds from Visapore and Golconda, brought by the caravans; rubies of Giamschid; pearls of Ophir; topazes from Brazil; and opals from Bohemia, in great abundance; with turquoises, garnets, aqua-marines, and agates, without number, and literally lying in heaps, in the shops. The Turks are very fond of precious stones; and this not merely as luxuries, but as depositaries of wealth. Ignorant of the refinements of modern finance, they draw no interest from their capital;—so doing being, indeed, rigorously prohibited by the Koran; and it is for this reason, that we find the proposals for "Turkish Loans" always violently opposed by the old Turkish party. A diamond is not only easy to conceal, and to carry, but embodies a very large value in a minute compass; and, in an eastern point of view, is a most desirable investment, although it makes no return; but, nevertheless, if you try to tempt Arab or Turk to part with the stone jar in which he conceals his treasure, under the inducement of four or five per cent., somehow or other, the thing seems suddenly to have been permitted by Mahomet.

These precious stones are generally either uncut, or only rose-cut; for the Orientals themselves do not cut diamonds or rubies—either from not understanding the process, or not possessing the diamond-dust necessary for

the purpose, or from an unwillingness to diminish the weight of the stones themselves. The settings, of such stones as are mounted, are coarse and massive, and in the antique Genoese style. The exquisite skill of the Arabs in the working of jewelry, has left few traces among the Turks. The jewels consist chiefly of necklaces, earrings, head-ornaments, stars, flowers, crescents, rings for the ankles, and handles of sabres or poignards; but they are never displayed in all their splendour, except in the recesses of the harem; where they adorn the lovely forms of the odalisques, reclining, beneath the eye of the master, in a corner of the divan;—and all this magnificence is, for strangers, as if it did not exist.

Although the wealth of the foregoing sentences—starred, as they are, with the names of precious stones—may have made the reader dream of the Cave of Aboul-cassem, (*again* involuntarily returning to that inexhaustible mine of oriental imagery and association—"The Arabian Nights,") he must imagine nothing of particular brilliancy in the aspect of the jewellers' shops themselves—for the Turks do not understand the art of displaying any of their wares; and the rough diamonds, and other stones, lying in little boxes of common wood, really look little different from bits of glass; although, in fact, one might easily spend 1,000,000 of francs, in any one of these obscure and paltry shops.

But, the "Bazaar of Arms" may be considered as the very heart of Islam, and of Turkey as it was. No new ideas have intruded there. The party of "Old Turkey" sits there, in solemn and cross-legged composure; professing, for the "dogs of Christians," a contempt as profound as in the days of Mahomet II. Time has stood still for these worthy Osmanli, who yet grieve for the janissaries and the ancient barbarisms—perhaps, with some reason.

Among them, you find the great, overhanging turbans; dolmans, bordered with fur; huge Mameluke trousers; enormously broad sashes; and all the other elements of the really "classic" Turkish costume; such as we have, all our lives, connected with the ideal of "a Turk." There, too, are those faces, as impassive, as fixed, as Fate itself; those grave, stern eyes; the hawk nose, curving above the long and snowy beard; the sallow cheeks; the robust frame, weakened by the use of opium, and other sensual indulgences: in short, that aspect of the Turk of pure race, and ancient faith, which is rapidly disappearing, and will soon be found only in the very heart of Asia.

At noon, the Bazaar of Arms closes its doors, in contempt of custom; and these millionaire merchants retire to their kiosks, on the shores of the Bosphorus, where, unhappily, they are compelled to look out upon crowds of Christian ships and flags, and, above all, upon steamers—those diabolical inventions of the accursed Frankish dogs!

The riches heaped up in this bazaar are incalculable, and the assemblage of rare and antique arms is astonishingly curious. There are Damascus blades, similar to that with which Saladin severed his scarf of gauze, while floating in the air, in presence of Richard Cœur-de-Lion, who had just severed a bar of steel, with his own mighty, two-handed sword; here are *kandjars*, the dull and blue steel of which, pierces a cuirass as if it were paper, and the handles of which are mere masses of jewels; old guns—wonders of carving and inlaying; battle-axes, which may have served Timour, Genghis-Khan, or Scanderberg, to hammer the helmets and heads of their enemies; and, in fact, the whole savage and barbarous arsenal of ancient Islam.

There, glow and sparkle, in a ray of sunlight falling

from the arched roof, saddles and housings, embroidered with gold or silver, and literally blazing with suns and moons of diamonds, and stars of sapphires; bits and stirrups of silver-gilt; and caparisons, whose oriental magnificence has decked the noble coursers of Nedji—those worthy descendants of Dahi, of Rabra, Haffar, Na-âmah, and other world-renowned steeds, of the matchless old races of Islam and the Desert.

It is a thing very remarkable, amidst the general carelessness and fatalism of the Moslemah, that this bazaar is considered so precious, that smoking is strictly prohibited within its precincts! This one word says everything; for the Turkish fatalist would, ordinarily, light his pipe while sitting in a powder magazine.

By way of contrast to these splendours, let us speak, for a moment, of the “Lice-Bazaar.” It is the dead-house, the charnel, the knacker’s-yard, in which all these magnificent things finally end their career, after passing through the numerous stages of their decadence. The caftan which has shone upon the shoulders of a vizier or pasha, finishes its course upon the back of a porter or groom. The embroidered jacket, which concealed the wealth of loveliness of some fair Georgian of the harem, envelopes, when soiled and faded, the mummified carcass of some old beggar-woman.

It is an incredible agglomeration of rags and leavings, in which whatever is not a hole, is a stain; and all of which hangs and swings upon rusty nails, with that vague sort of human look, invariably acquired by clothes worn for a length of time—seeming almost as if the ghosts of the former owners must still inhabit the spectral garments. In other times, the Plague lay hidden among the folds of these nameless rags; and slept there, like a gigantic spider, concealed in the depths of his dusty web, in some

dark and obscure corner, and waiting the approach of his victim.

The “Rastro” of Madrid, the “Temple” in Paris, or the ancient “Alsatia” of London, could offer no parallel to this vast cemetery of oriental finery—known by the horribly significant name which I have mentioned above, but which I will not repeat.

I trust that my readers will forgive me this squalid picture, in consideration of the jewels, the embroideries, and the perfumes, of which the rest of my chapter is redolent, or with which it sparkles; but, in any case, my conscience acquits me; for the traveller is like the doctor—he may say anything, and of anything.

XI.

THE DANCING DERVISHES.

THE dancing dervishes, or *mevélawites*, are a kind of Mahometan monks, who live in community, in the monasteries called *tekkés*. The word "Dervish," signifies "poor ;" but this does not prevent their communities from possessing great wealth, derived from the legacies and gifts of the faithful. This designation, once true, is still retained ; although it has long ceased to be applicable.

The muftis and ulemahs,—the regular authorities and priests of Mahometan law and religion—look with no favourable eye upon the dervishes ; whether from some secret difference of doctrine, or from the influence which the latter have with the multitude, or only from the dislike which the regular clergy always feel towards the itinerant or mendicant orders, I am not sufficiently profound in Mahometan doctrine to declare ; and I shall, therefore, limit myself to looking at the dervishes in a purely pictorial point of view, and to describing, as I best may, their singular and remarkable exercises.

Contrary to the custom of all the other Moslemah, who refuse to let Giaours be present at any of their religious ceremonies, and drive them with violence from the mosques, if they intrude during the hours of prayer, the dervishes permit Europeans to penetrate to the very heart of their *tekkés*, on the sole condition of leaving their boots or shoes at the entrance, and entering in bare feet or with slippers. They chaunt their litanies, and perform their

evolutions, without seeming in the least disturbed by the presence of Christians; whose attendance as spectators, is said, on the contrary, to be regarded by them as rather flattering than otherwise.

The tekké of Pera is situated upon a spot crowded with tombs, and encumbered with gravestones of marble, and funereal cypresses; being a sort of continuation of the Little Field.

The front of the building is very simple, being composed of a doorway, surmounted by an entablature, bearing an inscription; a wall, pierced with grated windows, exposing to view the sepulchres of the ancient dervishes—for in Turkey the dead are always at the elbow of the living—and a fountain furnished with drinking-cups for the poor, surrounded with porters, fatigued by the terrible ascent of the hill of Galata. About all this, there is nothing monumental, but it is not without character. The spreading larch trees of the garden, and the blue cupola and white minarets of the mosque which forms a part of the structure, seen above the walls against the blue sky, combine to recall the presence of the Orient.

The interior resembles that of all other Mahometan buildings. There are none of those long arched cloisters, or those interminable corridors, out of which open long ranges of cells;—pious prisons of voluntary recluses;—of those silent courts, where the grass grows amid the paved walks, and the fountain is green with the moss of solitude: nothing, in short, of that cold and sepulchral aspect which is associated with the word “Monastery” in all Catholic countries.

On the contrary, cheerful apartments, painted in gay colours, gladdened by sunlight, and having a superb view of the Bosphorus—a magnificent panorama, bathed in air and light. Scutari and Kadi-Keni, lying outspread upon

the Asiatic shore ; the Olympus of Bithynia, wrapped in snow ; the Isles of Princes—spots of blue, upon the rippled surface of the sea ; Serai-Bournou, with its palaces, its kiosks, and its gardens ; Sultan-Achmet, flanked by its six minarets ; the forest created by the masts of ships of all nations : all combine to form a spectacle, ever changing, ever new, and on which one could gaze for ever, without weariness, or sense of monotony.

The hall in which the dervishes execute their religious dances, is at the extremity of the court of the convent. The external appearance of the edifice gives no indication of its use, except by the inscription of a few ciphers, and some verses of the Koran, above its entrance ; written with that wonderful skill and certitude of hand, which the Turks possess in such a remarkable degree. These ciphers and inscriptions form a prominent feature in oriental ornamentation—for they are as much arabesques as letters.

The interior of this hall resembles, at once, a ball-room and a theatre. The centre presents a floor, perfectly smooth and highly polished, enclosed by a circular balustrade, about three feet in height ; some slender columns support a gallery, which forms the same circuit, and contains places for persons of distinction, a box for the Sultan, and others prepared for females. These last (termed the *serail*) are defended from the profane gaze, by close lattices, similar to those seen at the windows of the harems. The orchestra is placed at the end, opposite to the *mirah*, or pulpit, which is ornamented with tablets, inscribed with the never-failing verses of the Koran, and with the monograms of sultans or viziers, who have been benefactors of the order. All this is painted in blue and white, and exhibits a remarkable purity of colour, greatly enhancing the gay and joyous air of the place. One would imagine himself awaiting the performances of a class about to

practise a waltz of Cellarius, rather than the religious exercises of a sect of fanatics.

I seated myself, cross-legged, amidst a number of Turks and Franks, all alike barefooted ; and all close to the balustrade, so as to lose nothing of the approaching exhibition.

After a long delay, the Dervishes came slowly in, two-and-two ; and the chief of the community seated himself upon a carpet of gazelle skins, before the *mirah*, and between two acolytes. He was a little old man, with a leaden complexion, wrinkled visage, and sparse beard ; his eyes, sparkling from time to time, gave the only air of life which was discernible in his impassive, and almost corpse-like face.

The Dervishes defile before him, saluting him in the Eastern manner, with the most profound marks of respect, as if he were a Sultan or a Saint. This salute was at once an act of politeness, an obeisance, and a religious evolution—the movements were slow, rhythmical, and recurring ;—and the rite finished. Each Dervish took his place in front of the *mirah*.

The head-dress of these Mahometan monks, consisted of a cap of felt, about an inch in height, of a brown or russet colour, and which cannot be better compared, as to its form, than to a shallow flower-pot, inverted, and into which they had stuck their heads. They wore jackets of a white stuff, immense tunics or petticoats of the same hue—much resembling the tunics worn by the Greeks—and close white trousers descending to the ankle ; about all which there was certainly nothing strikingly monkish, although not deficient in a sort of elegance. For the moment they could not be seen distinctly ; for they were wrapped in mantles of blue, green, and other colours, which made no part of their uniform, and which they

threw aside at the commencement of their dance, to resume them again, when sinking, exhausted, streaming with perspiration, and overcome with ecstasy and fatigue.

The prayers commenced, and with them the genuflexions, prostrations, and grimaces, usual to the Mussulman ritual: so droll to us, and indeed so laughable, but for a conviction of the sincerity of the devotees. These alternations of elevation and abasement, remind one of fowls, who plunge their beaks eagerly to the ground, and raise them again as rapidly after having seized the grain, or the worm which they sought.

These orisons were rather long, or at least seemed so, to our impatient expectation of what was to follow; as indeed they must ever do to Europeans, who derive from them no hope of reposing, after death, beneath the shade of the tree "Tuba," in the harem-paradise of Mahomet; or of mirroring themselves throughout eternity, in the black eyes of the ever-immaculate and ever-youthful houris. Nevertheless, these pious murmurs, by their monotonous persistence, had a remarkable effect upon the system of even the unbelievers; and might, therefore, well impress in a manner still more extraordinary, those who took part in it with the additional incitement of absolute belief; raising them to a point of ecstasy, or sort of religious catalepsy, similar to that extra-natural insensibility of martyrs amidst the most horrible tortures.

When they had chanted enough verses of the Koran, wagged their heads sufficiently, and made a satisfactory number of prostrations, the Dervishes rose in a body, threw aside their mantles, and again marched in procession—two-and-two—around the hall. Each couple passed in front of the superior, who remained standing, and after exchanging salutations with them, made to each a sort of gesture of benediction, or magnetic pass; which was executed

in a very singular manner. The last Dervish of each couple thus blessed, took by the hand one of the next couple, and appeared to present him to the Iman; the same ceremony being repeated from group to group, until all had passed.

A remarkable change was already effected in the physiognomies of the Dervishes, thus prepared for their fit of ecstasy. On entering, they had a dull, depressed, and drowsy air; their heads drooped upon their breasts, or were buried beneath their dark caps; but now their visages brightened, their eyes began to sparkle, they held themselves more erect, and trod more firmly, and the heels of their feet began to beat time upon the floor, with an involuntary sort of nervous action.

To the nasal chanting of passages from the Koran, was now added an accompaniment of flutes and *tarboukas*. The *tarboukas* marked the measure, and formed the bass; and the flutes performed, in unison, a continuous strain of a very high pitch, and of wonderful sweetness.

The "motive" of the tune, recurred invariably after a few variations, and was constantly sustained; producing at length an irresistible effect upon the sensibilities, and inducing an involuntary sympathy with its expression; as some classes of female beauty reveal themselves only gradually, and seem to augment in loveliness as you continue to contemplate them. This tune, of a singular and wild character, was strangely touching and intoxicating in its effect; and filled my mind with various dreams and emotions, all tending, however, towards a disposition to abandon myself to the movement of the music. Recollections of some past existence seemed to be crowding upon me; faces well known, but which I have never encountered in this world, appeared to smile upon me, with an indefinable expression of love and reproach; innumerable images of long-forgotten dreams floated around

me; and I began to balance my head from shoulder to shoulder, overpowered by the potency of incantation and evocation, of music so opposed to all my experiences, and at the same time of such penetrating and intoxicating sweetness.

Motionless, in the middle of the circular area already described, the Dervishes appeared as if gradually intoxicating themselves with the music, so delicately barbarous and so melodiously savage; of which the primitive burthen is traceable, perhaps, to the earliest ages of the world. At length one of them opened his arms, extended them horizontally, and began to turn slowly round, without otherwise changing his position, gently moving his bare-feet, which made no sound upon the polished floor. His tunic, like a bird about to take flight, began to tremble, and slightly to rise and fall. The speed of the movement increased; the fragile tissue of the dress, lifted by the air, in which it revolved, spread itself in a circle and took the form of a bell, until at length it resembled a mere whirlwind of white, of which the Dervish formed the centre.

To the first who commenced these evolutions was soon added a second, then a third, until the whole band had followed, seized by some sort of irresistible vertigo.

They waltzed with their arms extended, the head leaning upon the shoulder, the eyes partially closed, and the mouth half open, like bold swimmers, who abandoned themselves to the current of some flood of ecstasy. Their movements were regular, undulating, and showing an agility quite extraordinary; no apparent effort, no appearance of fatigue.

The most intrepid German waltzer would have dropped down dead with suffocation and giddiness, while they continued to turn, each upon his own centre, as if driven

by some irresistible impulse ; and appearing like tops, which seem immoveable at the moment when they revolve with the most dazzling rapidity, and appear to sleep to the sound of their own whirling.

It was astonishing to see twenty or more of them in one group, pirouetting in the middle of their robes, outspread till they resembled the chalice of some vast lily inverted, without ever jostling one another, or moving out of the orbit of their own particular whirlwind, or losing for an instant the measure indicated by the tarboukas.

The Iman moved about among the groups, sometimes clapping his hands, either to cause the orchestra to quicken or retard the measure, or to encourage the dancers, and applaud their pious zeal. His impassive visage formed a striking contrast to all those flushed and convulsed faces ; and that passionless and cold old man passed, with the step of a phantom, among those frenzied groups, as if he had no share in their faith, or had long since become insensible to the intoxication which so wrought upon them ; as persons become from long habit callous to the effect of even the most potent drugs.

There was now a pause in the dance. The Dervishes formed again in couples, and again passed in procession, two or three times around the hall. This evolution, performed at a very gentle pace, gave them time to take breath and recover themselves.

What I had already seen (as I soon discovered) had been, as it were, but the prelude to the symphony : the introduction of the poem ; the preparation for the waltz.

The tarboukas began to give forth a much quicker measure ; the tones of the flutes became shriller, and the Dervishes resumed their dance with redoubled activity.

This activity had, however, nothing disorderly nor feverish about it, but was strictly regulated and restrained by the time of the music. The rotatory movement became more rapid, the number of turns executed in a minute was greatly increased; but each waltzer remained calm and silent in his own position; seeming, indeed, more fixed and more erect, like a top as it augments its velocity. The dancers raised their arms, or let them fall lightly, according to the degree of fatigue or of ecstasy which they experienced; sometimes the head was thrown back, the eyes half shut, and the mouth partly opened; or, at other moments, it fell upon the chest, not as if fatigued, but as if they were overpowered by the excess of voluptuous sensation: or yet more frequently, the head rested upon one lifted arm, as though upon a pillow, in full enjoyment of some celestial dream.

One old man, with a "Socratic" kind of face, ugly enough while in repose, waltzed with a vigour and persistency, amazing in one of his age; and his commonplace visage took, under the magical excitement of the dance, an aspect of positive beauty. The soul, so to speak, shone in the face, and overpowered its physical defects, by the glow of enthusiasm with which it brightened the visage. Many other and very singular varieties of expression and attitude were traceable among the throng; and not a few countenances and forms of most surpassing majesty and beauty; all pervaded by the one indescribable expression of a bliss almost superhuman.

What could they see in their strange and enraptured visions? The forests of emerald with fruit of rubies; the mountains of amber and of myrrh; the kiosks of diamonds, and tents of pearl, of the Paradise of Mahomet? Their smiling lips were, surely, tasting the perfumed kisses of the many-coloured houris of that sensual heaven;

their fixed gaze was fastened, doubtless, upon the splendours of that Throne of Allah, which is wrapped in light too dazzling for ordinary human conception; and this dull earth, which they barely touched in their ærial movements, had disappeared like a light mist, before these surpassing splendours, while the ecstasies were floating passively in the great infinity of space.

Again the tarboukas quicken their measure, and the flutes attain a height and clearness of tone, whose fineness seems to suggest an air-drawn thread of crystal, of miraculous tenuity and brightness. The Dervishes literally disappear in the vaporous cloud, formed by their snowy robes; and nothing is seen but innumerable revolving clouds of white, like shadows of spirits, or outspread wings of some strange celestial birds.

Occasionally a single Dervish pauses. His robe continues to flutter for some moments, until, no longer sustained by the rotatory motion of its wearer, it sinks again into quiescence, and resumes its perpendicular folds, resembling those of some antique Grecian drapery. Then the Dervish drops upon his knees, with his face to the ground, and a lay-brother approaches and enwraps him in one of those mantles which I have already described; as a jockey carefully covers the noble racer who has just finished a course. The Iman draws near the prostrate Dervish, mutters over him some sacred formula, and then proceeds to the next.

Presently the whole brotherhood are prostrate, overpowered by the excess of their excitement, and the violence of their exercise. Before long, however, they rise again; make once more the circuit of the hall, and issue from the apartment in the same order as that in which they entered it;—while I go to seek my shoes at the door, confused with this giddy spectacle; and for the

whole remainder of the day, I see before my eyes nothing but whirlwinds of white tunics, and hear nothing but the monotonous murmur of the implacably sweet and persistent air of the flutes of the Dervishes, shrilling through and above the deep bass growling of the tarboukas.

XII.

THE HOWLING DERVISHES.

AFTER seeing the "Dancing Dervishes" of Pera, one should make a visit to the "Howling Dervishes" of Scutari. I, therefore, took a caique at Top-Hané, with two pairs of oars, manned by two vigorous Arnaouts, which soon bore me towards the coast of Asia, despite the violence of the current.

The boiling and surging waters sparkled in the sunlight in millions of streaks of silver, shaded by clouds of black and white birds (known by the poetic name of "souls in torment," because of their perpetual restlessness), who skim along the surface of the Bosphorus in flights of two or three hundred, with inconceivable rapidity, their feet in the water, and their wings in the air, as if they pursued some invisible prey: they have, on this account, obtained the additional designation of "wind-chasers." As they approach, they seem like clouds of dry leaves driven before the autumn wind, and suggest all sorts of dreamy ideas and associations.

The landing-place of Scutari presents a most picturesque appearance. A sort of floating stage, composed of great beams, on which gulls and albatrosses were lying, formed the foreground, jointly with a café surrounded by benches filled with smokers, and which projected into the water upon a little mole; around were moored throngs of caiques, canoes, feluccas, and boats of every descrip-

tion, while fig-trees, and other trees of brilliant green, gave force and contrast to the picture.

The white walls of the mosque of Buyuck-Djami appeared in the back-ground. This mosque has a fine effect, with its cupola, its minaret, its roof dotted with numerous domes, its Arabic arcades, broad flights of steps, and masses of masonry, intermingled with tufts of verdant foliage.

A fountain, adorned with arabesques, surrounded with flowers and verdure, and literally covered with inscriptions carved in relief upon the marble, occupies the centre of the small square or quay, on which abuts the principal street of Scutari.

At the foot of this fountain—the mouths of which unfortunately supply no water—are grouped throngs of women, in feredjes of white, pink, lilac, or green; sitting, standing, or reclining in attitudes of graceful nonchalance; holding beautiful children in their arms, or watching the sports of their somewhat older charges, with covert glances of their half-seen black eyes.

Men with horses for hire; grooms holding their masters' steeds by the bridle; *talikas* and *arabas*—two kinds of Turkish carriages—drawn by buffaloes or white oxen; and crowds of dogs—mostly of a red colour, rarely seen in Western countries—lying asleep in the sunshine,—give animation to the scene, by their various grouping and blending, and their strange contrasts of form and colour.

Beyond, lies the town of Scutari, with its red houses, and its white minarets relieved against the dark masses of cypresses of the more distant cemetery of the Little Field.

The chief street of the town, which rises gradually until it reaches the summit of the hill, has an air more

decidedly oriental and Turkish than that of any other street in Constantinople. At last, there is a spot which assures the traveller, unmistakeably, that he is upon Asiatic ground, and that he treads the veritable soil of Islam. No European ideas or novelties have made their way across the narrow arm of the sea which we have just traversed with a few strokes of our oars. The ancient peculiarity of costume, the overhanging turban, the long pellisse, and the light-coloured caftan, are much more frequent here than in Istamboul proper. The "Reform" seems not to have penetrated to Scutari.¹

The street is lined with the stalls of tobacco merchants, who display, upon shelves or tables, their pale tufts of "latakia," surmounted by a lemon; with itinerant cook-shops, where *kébab*s are roasting on perpendicular spits; butchers' stalls, exhibiting quarters of meat, suspended by chains amid clouds of flies; nooks, decorated with miracles of caligraphic skill, in which scribes are writing out petitions for attendant clients; and cawadgis serving their customers with narghilés or chibouques. Here and there the line of houses is broken, to give place to a little cemetery, which steps in familiarly between a couple of shops. In another place, a dozen houses are wanting, and their place supplied by heaps of ashes and rubble, from which rise the charred skeletons of the brick chimneys, which alone had strength to resist the fire that destroyed the houses of which they once formed a part.

¹ The repeated allusions of the author to "the Reform," render it desirable, perhaps, to remark that the word is used in reference to the momentous changes—of costume, of habit, and of the entire system of internal government—effected in Turkey by the late Sultan; and which commenced with the overthrow of the Janissaries, and the introduction of European discipline, and semi-European uniform, into the Turkish army.—TRANS.

Arabas, filled with females, seated on the floors of the carriages, in Turkish, or tailor-like fashion, mount or descend the street, drawn deliberately along by great bluish oxen guided by a groom or eunuch, who not unfrequently holds the horn of one of the beasts in his hand. The dogs, sleeping in the middle of the street, reluctantly rouse themselves, even to escape being trampled beneath the hoofs of the oxen, or crushed by the clumsy wheels of the arabas. Luckily for the dogs, the progress of these primitive vehicles is slow, for the Turk is never in a hurry.

These arabas are gilded and painted, and covered with a cloth strained upon hoops; and as they passed, there rang out from within the shout of merry voices, and peal upon peal of joyous laughter. By watching the opportunity, a casual glimpse of the interior could be obtained, and of lovely faces from which the veils were thrown aside, in the belief that they were screened from the profane gaze.

In front, some little girls, of a dozen years old, not yet masqued by the pitiless yachmack, betray, by their precocious beauty, the incognito of their mothers, crouching behind them.

From the long almond-eyes of these young beauties, their eye-brows penciled with Indian-ink, slightly aquiline noses, exquisitely-perfect oval contour of face, and lips like parted pomegranates,—it is not difficult, by conceding a little fuller development, to image forth an ideal of a Turkish Venus, worthy to be indeed the light of a Sultan's harem.

And now comes a procession of another kind: a coffin, covered with a green pall, and borne upon the shoulders of six men walking at a rapid pace, takes its way, in all haste, towards the great cemetery of Scutari; where its inmate may find, under the shade of the lofty

cypresses, and beneath the soil of his native Asia, a repose which the Franks of Europe cannot disturb.

Some herdsmen, dragging along an enormous sheep, cross unceremoniously the path of the funeral cortége, which runs as if the Devil were after it. A company of mounted soldiers pass with a haughty and indolent air; a string of camels, with a little ass at their head, move onwards, waving their great ostrich-necks, on their way to join some caravan; and through this jostling and motley crowd the funeral procession rattles along; while I also pursue my course, and at length reach the *Tekké* of the Howling Dervishes, on the height of Scutari.

I am too early. Turkish time, which is reckoned from sun-rise, does not at all coincide with the Frankish mode of computation; and perpetual calculations and allowances are necessary, to convey to a European mind any precise idea of what a certain hour *means*, when named according to the Turkish scale.

While waiting, we amuse ourselves by taking coffee, pipes, and iced-water, at a café situated near the entrance of the cemetery.¹ We are served by a bright-eyed little boy, who seems to multiply himself miraculously, to meet the perpetual and conflicting demands of the numerous customers. He often brings "fire" in one hand, and water in the other; like those little genii, who assisted at the initiations into the antique "mysteries," and who are portrayed in such impossible attitudes upon the Etruscan vases.

Having exhausted all the amusement derivable from the coffee and the café, we entered the court of the Tekké.

¹ The reader will be pleased to remember, that this is not the disused Great or Little Field of *Pera*, but the great cemetery of Scutari, on the opposite side of the Bosphorus, and in constant use for interments.—
TRANS.

It is ornamented with a fountain, in the form of a tomb ; recalling to mind those coffins covered with cashmere, which are visible through the gratings of the funeral chapels of the Sultans. A vendor of cakes made of rice (and which are eaten sprinkled with a little cherry or rose water), afforded us the means of appeasing, or rather of deluding, our appetites ; sharpened, as they were, by the fresh air of the sea, our long walk, and the lapse of time since our frugal, but detestable breakfast. This cake-dealer carried his wares upon a very clean tray of bright tin, suspended before him, and his merchandise had, at least, the merit of not being dear. For a few pieces of money, the value of which was scarcely appreciable, one could gorge himself.

Near the gate of the Tekké, was seated a very strange-looking person, wrapped in a loose robe of camels'-skin, fastened with a rope ; his head being encircled by a bit of old rag, twisted into the form of a turban ; while his whole aspect, and the mould of his features, were among the most remarkable, as well as the most hideous, that I have ever beheld. Had he been dressed in motley, he would have passed for a revivification of one of those professed fools or jesters, who, in the olden time, formed a part of the establishments of the great ; and who were as much prized for grotesque ugliness, as for wit. This poor wretch was, in fact, a fool ; and it is well known what licence the Turks allow idiots and madmen, and how much they even reverence their persons and vagaries, under a belief that their condition is not merely "a visitation of God," but an evidence of actual inspiration.

This unfortunate had conceived a particular affection for the court of the Tekké ; and would remain there the whole day, seated upon one particular block of stone, wagging his head from side to side, and chattering the

Mahometan litany ; rolling, meantime, a rosary between his fingers, and pursuing some vague fancy, which caused him to wear perpetually that vacant and painful smile which characterises his class. Wrapped in profound abstraction, disturbed only by some occasional activity, unwonted in degree, on the part of the vermin who inhabited his person and garments (and whom he disposed of after the manner of Murillo's mendicant), he seemed to enjoy the most perfect beatitude.

Some devotees piously embraced this disgusting object (who received their semi-adoration as passively as a Japanese idol), and then, divesting themselves of their shoes, proceeded to the interior of the building.

As to ourselves, we were not permitted to enter until the preliminary prayers were finished ; but we could hear, from without, chants of a grave and elevated character, not unlike the Gregorian-chant, and to which the guttural tones of the Turkish language gave a certain wild and savage power.

We threw off our shoes among the heap of the same accumulated at the door, and took our stand behind a wooden balustrade, together with some other strangers, among whom were two capuchin monks in full costume ; frocks on their shoulders and ropes around their waists. They did not seem, however, to be regarded with any hostility by the Mussulman portion of the assembly ; a degree of toleration, at once singular and creditable, in a conventicle of fanatics of another creed.

The hall of the Dervishes of Scutari is not circular, like that of those of Pera, but is a simple parallelogram, devoid of all architectural character. Upon the bare walls are suspended a dozen or so of enormous tambourines, and some tablets inscribed with verses of the Koran. Beside the *mirah*, and above the carpet where the Iman

and his acolytes take their seats, the wall presents a ferocious sort of decoration, reminding one of the chamber of a torturer or inquisitor. This consists of some darts, terminating in a heart of lead, whence hang chains, spikes, pincers, and many varieties of arms and instruments of the most barbarous appearance, and for the most incomprehensible purposes; but still, with that sort of horrible air about them, which makes the blood curdle and the skin creep, as when beholding the outspread instruments of a surgeon, just prior to the performance of an operation. It is with these atrocious instruments that the Howling Dervishes scourge and wound themselves, when they attain the climax of their religious delirium, and when cries alone are inadequate to the expression of their holy phrenzy.

The Iman was a great, gaunt, meagre figure, with a deeply-marked face,—full, however, of force and majesty. Beside him stood a handsome young man, in a white turban fastened with a transverse band of gold and a green pelisse, like those worn by the descendants of the Prophet, or the *hadjis*, who have performed the pilgrimage to Mecca; whose chiselled features indicated rather an Arabic than a Turkish origin.

In front were ranged the Dervishes in a posture of devotion, repeating in unison a sort of litany, intoned by one of their number, in a stentorian voice. At each verse they moved their heads forward and backward, with a motion calculated almost to produce a sympathetic giddiness in the spectators. Occasionally one of these last (among the Mussulman part of the audience), attracted by the contagion of this oscillation, quitted his place in the chancel and mingled with the Dervishes, where he knelt beside the others, and began balancing himself like a bear in a cage.

The chant grew louder and louder ; the movement of the heads quickened ; the visages of the Dervishes began to grow livid, and their chests to pant. The speaker uttered his words with redoubled energy ; and we awaited, with anxious expectancy, that which was to follow.

Some of the Dervishes, excited to the proper degree, arose, and continued their bowing movement with such violence, that they seemed in danger of cracking their skulls against the walls, or of dislocating the vertebræ of their spines.

Presently all were standing. This is the moment when the gigantic tambourines should be brought into play ; but this time it was not done, the “subjects” being already sufficiently excited ; and, moreover, the fast of Ramadan being in force, it was not desired to overtax their powers.

They now formed a chain, by putting their hands on each other’s shoulders, and began to justify their distinctive name, by heaving up from the very depths of their chests a hoarse and prolonged cry, or howl, of “*Allah-hou !*” which hardly seemed to come from any human voice.

The whole band, animated as it were by one feeling, retired one step simultaneously, and then threw themselves forward with an equally simultaneous plunge ; shouting in a deep tone, which resembled the growling of a menagerie, when the lions, tigers, panthers, and hyenas are all enraged by some unexpected postponement of their feeding-time.

Little by little the inspiration comes. Their eyes begin to shine, like those of wild beasts in the depths of a dark cavern ; an epileptic foam gathers about their lips ; their countenances are distorted, and shine lividly through profuse perspiration. The whole line falls back at once, before some invisible gust, like reeds before a tempest,

and then rises again as suddenly; and always, at each forward plunge, the terrible "Allah-hou!" bursts forth with increasing fury! How shouts of such unearthly violence, repeated during more than an hour, could fail to burst the osseous frame of the chest and flood the lungs with blood, from ruptured vessels, is inexplicable.

The shouts became, after a time, mere roarings; and one Dervish in particular, with a face of miraculous sallowness and leanness, a gigantic fleshless frame to match, and a voice deep and cavernous beyond expression, balanced his head amid its matted locks of long black hair, and tore up, as it were, from his skeleton chest, the growls of a tiger,—the roars of a lion,—the yells of a wounded wolf bleeding in the snow;—cries full of rage and yet of longing, the vague utterance of some unknown and fierce voluptuousness;—blended, sometimes, with sighs of human sorrow or weakness,—protests of the frail body, burned and bruised by the fiery and restless soul.

Excited by the feverish ardour of this infuriated devotee, all the troop threw themselves back again in one mass, and then forward, like a line of intoxicated soldiers, yelling out, at the same instant, one supreme "Allah-hou!" with a sound comparable to nothing earthly, unless to the voice of some mammoth or mastodon, buried amid the colossal herbage of an antediluvian marsh. The floor trembled beneath the measured tramping of the phrenzied band, and the walls seemed ready to tumble in ruins about us, like those of a second Jericho; shaken to their foundations, by the tumult and uproar of these horrible and tremendous clamours.

The two capuchin monks (whom I have already named as spectators) laughed, foolishly, in their sleeves, at what they considered the absurdity of all this; forgetting that they themselves were a kind of Catholic Dervishes, morti-

fyng themselves in another manner, to approach a Deity of different attributes. The Dervishes seek "Allah," and address Him in their howlings, as the Capuchins seek Jehovah in their prayers, their fasts, and their ascetic exercises.

I confess that this want of tolerance, nay, even of intelligence, annoyed me excessively; for sincerity deserves respect everywhere, and however mistaken its manifestation; and, to me, this ridicule seemed sadly misplaced; for I can appreciate, alike, the Hindoo Fakir, the Trappist, and the Dervish, writhing beneath the immense pressure of the vague Infinite, and seeking to appease "the Unknown God, whom they ignorantly worship," by the immolation of their bodies and libations of their blood.

And now the exaltation had reached its climax. The howls, or shouts, succeeded each other without interval or cessation, and a sort of wild-beast odour was emitted from this mass of heated and sweltering bodies. Through the dust raised by their trampling feet, gleamed vaguely, as through an ensanguined mist, visages convulsed, distorted, and phrenzied, illumined by white eyes and delirious smiles.

The Iman remained standing before the mirah, encouraging the growing phrenzy by voice and gesture. A youth detached himself from the group and advanced towards the old man; and now we saw the *use* of some portions of the terrible instruments suspended from the wall. The assistants of the Iman took from the wall an exceedingly sharp sort of spike, or skewer, and handed it to their superior, who instantly transfixed with it both cheeks of the young devotee, without his showing the least sign of suffering. This operation performed, he returned to his place, and continued his movements as

before. It is difficult to imagine anything more strange in appearance, than this head thus “spitted;” and it would have seemed like some trick of a pantomime, but for the horrible consciousness of its reality.

Two other fanatics now sprung into the centre of the hall, and were supplied with two of those darts (already described), terminating in leaden hearts, and garnished with numerous small chains of iron. Taking these in their hands, they began a sort of poignard-dance, full of extraordinary and violent movements; but, instead of shunning the points of the darts, they sought every opportunity to wound themselves with them, and to scourge themselves with the iron chains, until they fell exhausted to the ground, reeking with blood and perspiration, and foaming like horses goaded to the utmost by the spur, and falling with fatigue before reaching the goal.

Presently, a pretty little girl, seven or eight years of age, who had been standing near the door during the whole ceremony, advanced alone towards the Iman, who received her in a paternal and affectionate manner. She then extended herself upon a sheepskin, which lay unrolled upon the floor, and the Iman, with a pair of large slippers upon his feet and supported by two of his attendants, mounted upon her little body, and stood there for several seconds. When he descended from this living pedestal, the little girl rose and withdrew, with an air of intense reverence and delight.

Some women then brought several children, of three or four years of age, and placed them successively upon the sheepskin, where they were affectionately trampled upon by the gigantic Iman. Some took it very kindly, but others cried like jays plucked alive. Their eyes seemed starting from their heads, and their little sides ready to burst with the enormous pressure; but the mothers

(whose eyes sparkled with delight and implicit faith) took them again in their arms, and soothed them with a few caresses; evidently strong in the universal Mussulman belief, that this imposition of the feet of the holy man is at once a cure and preventive for all maladies. To the children, succeeded young people, and even grown-up men and soldiers; nay, even one superior officer submitted to this singular ordeal.

As we issued from the hall, we encountered the young man whose cheeks the Iman had transfixed with the skewer. He had withdrawn the instrument of torture, and seemed none the worse for the operation; a small spot of purple on either cheek, being the sole remaining indication of the passage of the iron.

XIII.

THE CEMETERY OF SCUTARI.

I HARDLY know why the Turkish cemeteries inspire nothing of the sadness which attaches to those of Christian lands. A visit to Père-Lachaise plunges me into a sort of funereal melancholy, which lasts for several days; while I have passed successive hours in the cemeteries of Pera and Scutari, without any other feeling than that of a pleasing and dreamy pensiveness. Is it to the beauty of the sky, the clearness of the air, or the romantic charm of the situation, that this difference is attributable? or to some unconscious religious prejudice, causing one to regard with less reverence the tombs of "infidels," with whose future we have nothing in common?

These are questions which I cannot answer, although I have reflected much upon the subject; and the thing is perhaps really attributable to causes purely local, and to a natural accordance with the feeling which prevails around one.

Catholicism, nay, even Protestantism, has surrounded death with a certain sombre poetry of dread, unknown alike to Paganism and Mahometanism. It has imparted to its sepulchres lugubrious and cadaverous aspects and forms, combined to augment the sentiment of terror or repugnance already created, as completely as the antique urns suggest a contrary sentiment, with their gay bas-reliefs, or their graceful genii sporting amid flowers; or

the Mussulman tombs, enriched with blue and gold, and seeming, beneath the shade of overhanging foliage, rather kiosks devoted to eternal repose and peace, than the cold and damp abodes of mouldering corpses.

In these cemeteries, I have often smoked my pipe while seated upon a grave; an act which, in France, would have seemed strangely irreverent; while only a thin slab of marble and a few inches of mould separated me from the remains of a fellow-man.

More than once, I have traversed the cemetery of Pera by night, at an hour when the white sepulchral columns took the most fantastic forms in the moonlight, and seemed to range themselves in the fluctuating shadow, like the risen nuns in "Robert le Diable,"—without a single added pulsation of the heart acknowledging anything of terror, or even of solemnity, in the scene; a process which, I frankly confess, I could not go through in the cemetery of Montmartre, without a feeling of horror, and a nervous trepidation that would make me start at the slightest noise; although I have, a hundred times, in my travels, encountered dangers far more real, with far less of trepidation.

But, in the East, (as one cannot but perpetually remark) death blends so familiarly with life, that it loses its terror to a degree almost incredible.¹

The dead, above whose resting-place you drink your coffee or smoke your pipe, can never become spectres for

¹ It may, perhaps, be excusable to confirm the author's observations on this point, by an allusion to the small value at which human life is estimated in *China*; where, owing to the prevalence of the same despotism, which (by the constant and sudden recurrence of capital punishment) has destroyed all its sanctity in Turkey, human life is so lightly esteemed, that a man condemned to death can obtain *a substitute to suffer in his stead*, for a sum equivalent to little more than ten pounds sterling!—TRANS.

you. Thus, on issuing from the "menagerie" of the Howling Dervishes, I acceded, with pleasure, to a proposition, that we should forget the horror of the spectacle we had just witnessed, in a promenade through the great Cemetery of Scutari; the best situated, the largest, and the most "frequented" (by both dead and living), of any in the whole East.

It is an immense forest of cypress, covering a hilly site, intersected by large avenues, and bristling with tombstones throughout a space of more than three miles in extent. One can form no idea, in northern countries, from the poor dwarfed spindles which are there called cypresses, of the beauty, grandeur, and majesty, attained, beneath a southern sky, by these protectors of the sepulchre; which, however, from their arousing no melancholy sentiment, are as often ornaments of the garden as of the tomb.

With advanced age, the trunk of the cypress becomes divided into cylindrical sections, resembling those aggregations of columns so common in gothic cathedrals; its bark acquires a gray and silvery hue, and the branches form strange and grotesque angles, without disturbing the pyramidal shape and lofty air of the mass of foliage. The roots—tortuous and bare—are visible along the surface of the ground, which they seem to enfold like the claws of vultures crushing their prey, or serpents half buried in the earth.

Their sombre and massive verdure does not become discoloured beneath the burning sun of the tropics, but retains its full depth of hue, which seems almost black, as it stands relieved against the intense azure of the sky. There is no tree more majestic. It is in admirable harmony with the Italian architecture of the villas which here surround it, and strikingly contrasts its lofty and

dark cones with the slender white columns of the neighbouring minarets.

Beside every tomb a cypress is planted: every tree which stands erect in the burial-ground represents a dead man recumbent at its foot; and, inasmuch as this soil, enriched by human remains, fosters a singularly-rapid vegetation; and, as every day adds to the number of graves and of cypresses, the sepulchral forest grows, spreads, and rises, with a rapidity almost miraculous.

The Turks have no idea of those temporary grants of land, by which civilised communities concede to the dead a few years' lease of their graves, to reclaim the space when their mouldering remains shall have lost all individuality and commingled with the parent earth. Funereal economy is not so well understood by these worthy barbarians, as by more refined nations; and every dead man, poor or rich, once extended upon his final couch, may sleep there undisturbed, until the last trumpet arouses him from his slumber; or, at least, the hand of man will not disturb his repose.

Near the City of the Living, this City of the Dead extends indefinitely, gradually peopling itself with residents of most quiet habits, and who never emigrate. The inexhaustible quarries of Marmora furnish to each of these silent citizens a tablet of marble, which tells his name and abode; and although a coffin occupies but little space, and the ranks are closely serried, the City of the Dead covers a larger space than the other. Millions have there lain down, for ever, from the time of the original conquest of Byzantium, by Mahomet II., and each retains his place; while the living occupants of the neighbouring town remain there but for a time, and then come to swell the countless numbers of these denizens of the city of sepulchres.

If time, which destroys everything, does not overthrow and annihilate these monuments, and decapitate them, and if the dust of ages does not bury the remains of the broken tombs, this system of never intruding upon a grave once appropriated, would enable a patient statistician, by counting these funeral columns, to obtain an approximation to the number of the population of Constantinople in the year 1453,—the time of the fall of the Grecian Empire. Without the intervention of that invariable process of Nature, which tends to restore all natural things to their primitive state, the Turkish Empire, in pursuance of the present usage, would soon become nothing but one vast cemetery, from which the dead would expel the living.

Entering the cemetery, I pursued the main avenue, bordered on either side by lofty and overshadowing screens of the ever-recurring cypress. Stone-cutters, seated quietly by the way-side, are carving inscriptions upon tombs; *arabas* filled with females, pass on their way towards Hyder-Pasha; and women of disreputable character lounge about, distinguished by having their eyebrows united with a line of Indian-ink, and wearing transparent *yachmacks*, through which their faces are visible.

I presently quitted the beaten track, and, leaving my companions, directed my steps at random among the tombs, to study more closely the oriental accompaniments of death.

I have already said, in speaking of the Little Field of Pera, that the Turkish monuments are generally composed of pillars of marble, terminating in a kind of globe, bearing a vague resemblance to a human face and decorated with a carved turban, the form and folds of which indicate the rank of the deceased. But now, the turban is superseded by a coloured fez; the graves of the women

retaining, however, their distinctive mark as before, in the form of a stem of lotus, or a shoot of grape-vine, with leaves or grapes carved and painted in relief. At foot of the column, which is almost always of precisely the same form, and varied only by the degree of richness of the gilding and colouring, there is usually a flat stone, hollowed in the middle to form a small basin, some few inches in depth, in which the friends of the deceased place flowers, and pour milk or perfumes.

A day comes, however, when the flowers fade, and are not renewed; for grief for the departed is not eternal, and life were intolerable without forgetfulness. Water from the clouds replaces the rose-water, and the birds of the air come to drink the tears of the heavens, from the reservoir which once received the tears of affection. The doves dip their wings in these baths of marble, drying themselves in the sun while they coo from the summit of the superincumbent monument; and the dead, deceived, might suppose that he heard a sigh of faithful sorrow. Nothing could be prettier or more graceful, than this winged life, hovering and singing among the tombs.

Occasionally a *Turbé*, or species of chapel, with its Moorish arcades, rises amid the humbler tombs and serves as a sepulchral kiosk, to some Pasha surrounded by his family.

The Turks, who are grave, deliberate, and majestic in every action of life, hurry themselves only in the presence of death. The corpse, so soon as it has been subjected to the customary ablutions, is despatched to the cemetery at racing speed, placed upon its side so as to face Mecca and the East, and promptly covered with a few handfuls of earth. This extremity of haste, is adopted in accordance with a Mussulman superstition; the belief being, that the corpse suffers, until it is committed to the earth from which it sprung.

The Iman questions the deceased upon his faith in the leading doctrines of the Koran, his silence being taken for acquiescence; the assistants respond *Amin*, and the friends disperse, leaving the dead alone with eternity.

After this, it is believed that *Monkir* and *Nékir*—the two funereal angels, whose eyes of turquoise shine in faces of ebony—question the departed spirit as to the tenor of his life; and, according to his answers, assign the place which his soul is to occupy in Hell or Paradise. The Mahometan hell, however, is only a purgatory; for after having expiated their sins, by torments more or less severe and protracted, all true believers finish by being received to the embrace of houris and the ineffable presence of Allah.

At the head of each grave, is left a sort of hole or channel, conducting towards the ear of the deceased, that he may be enabled to hear the sighs, prayers, and lamentations of his family or friends. This opening—too often, alas! enlarged by the dogs or jackals—seems intended as a sort of vent for the sepulchre: a kind of peep-hole, through which this world can look into the other.

In wandering, with no fixed destination, I arrived at a part of the cemetery more ancient than the rest, and consequently more neglected. The sepulchral columns, nearly all out of perpendicular, leaned in every direction. Many were recumbent, as if tired of standing so long and thinking it useless to continue to designate graves which nobody now thought of visiting. The earth, sunken by the decay of the coffins, or the action of the rain, preserved but carelessly the secrets of the tomb. At nearly every step, my foot struck against some fragment of a jaw, a rib, or a thigh-bone; and amid an occasional patch of short turf, I could sometimes see shining spherical objects white and polished like ivory. These were skulls, basking

in the sun. In a few of the open graves, pious hands had replaced the bones with some degree of order ; from others, the fragments of skeletons rolled like pebbles about the deserted pathways.

I was seized with a strange and horrible curiosity to peer into some of those openings in the graves, of which I have before spoken ; to penetrate the mysterious darkness of the tomb, and behold the dead, mouldering within its limits. I stooped and gazed into some of these windows of the sepulchre ; and I could see, plainly, the dust of humanity in its undress. I saw the cranium—yellow, livid, grinning—with dislocated jaws, and empty sightless sockets ; the bony cage of the chest, half buried in sand or black mould, over which fell carelessly the skeleton arm. The rest was lost in shadow or in earth.

These sleepers seemed tranquil enough ; and, far from horrifying me, as I expected, the spectacle rather reassured me. There was, in reality, nothing there but phosphate of lime ; and the soul once departed, nature was resuming her elements, little by little, to form new combinations.

If, in former times, I had dreamed the *Comedie de la Mort* in the cemetery of Père-Lachaise, I certainly could not have written a single verse in the cemetery of Scutari. Under the tranquil shade of these cypresses, a human skull seems to impress me no more than a stone ; and the soothing fatalism of the East appears to creep over me, despite my Christianised terror of death, and my Catholic experience of the sepulchre. None of those dead have responded when questioned. Everywhere silence, calm forgetfulness, and dreamless sleep in the bosom of Nature, the holy mother.

I had placed my ear to many of the half-open graves ; but I heard no sound, unless it were the worm gnawing

among the cerements. None of these sleepers, lying upon their sides, had turned themselves, as if ill at ease ; and I continued my walk, striding over the tombs, and treading upon the relics of humanity, calm, serene, nay, almost smiling ; and thinking, with but little repugnance, of the day when the foot of the passing stranger should thus stumble over my head,—hollow and sonorous, like an empty bowl.

The rays of sunlight glanced through the dark pyramids of the cypresses, and played like wild-fires upon the white marble of the tombs. The doves cooed cheerfully, and the swallows made their joyous circuits in the deep blue of the heavens.

Some women, seated each in the centre of a small carpet, and accompanied by a negress or a child, seemed lost in melancholy reverie ; or reposing, lulled by some vision of tender remembrance. The air was soft and sweet ; and I never felt a stronger sense of life, than amid this sombre forest, whose soil was composed of the dust of the dead.

I had now rejoined my friends, and we visited a completely modern part of the cemetery. I there saw recent tombs, surrounded by railings and little gardens, in imitation of those of Père-Lachaise. Death, it would appear, has its “fashions” as well as Life ; and in this region there were none but fashionables of the newest mode, interred in the latest style. For my part, I preferred the column of marble, with the sculptured turban, and the verse of the Koran in letters of gold.

The road issuing from the cemetery leads to a large plain, called “Hyder-Pasha ;” a sort of parade-ground, which lies between Scutari and the extensive barracks of Kadi-Kieui. A wall, constructed of old and broken tombstones, extends on either side of the road, and forms a sort

of raised terrace of about three feet in height, affording the most admirable view of the scene around; which looks like an immense field of animated flowers.

Two or three lines of women, seated upon mats or carpets, form striking contrasts, with the varied colours of their feredjés, elegantly draped about them, and relieved by the pure white of the yachmack. In front of them, the red jackets, straw-coloured trousers, and braided waistcoats of the children, form a medley of rays of bright colours and golden embroidery.

At his first arrival in the East, the feredjé and the yachmack have, upon the traveller, the effect of the domino in a masquerade, where he distinguishes nothing, and feels in a manner dazzled by the eternal succession of formless shadows, which pass before his eyes, to all appearance each exactly like the other.

Soon, however, although you recognise no one, the eye becomes habituated to this uniformity; and you begin to discover differences, and appreciate forms beneath the satin which conceals them. Some ill-disguised grace betrays the youth of one, while the more advanced age of another is indicated by some opposite peculiarity. A breeze—propitious or unfortunate—lifts sometimes, for an instant, the lappet of lace; the face is seen despite the mask, and the black phantom becomes a woman. It is so in the East. The ample drapery of merino, which resembles a dressing-robe, or a bathing-gown, soon loses its mystery. The yachmack betrays an occasional unexpected transparency, and, despite all the wrappers with which Mussulman jealousy enfolds her, a Turkish woman, if not gazed at too openly, becomes in reality as “visible” as a European one.

The feredjé, which professes to conceal the figure, can also display it. Its ample folds, skilfully arranged, show

plainly the outline which they should disguise ; and in half opening it, under pretext of re-adjustment, the Turkish coquette—for there are such—shows sometimes, at the parting of her embroidered velvet jacket, a superb throat, scarcely clouded by a chemisette of gauze, and a bust like marble, which owes nothing to the artifice of the corset ; while those who have pretty hands, well know how to display their henna-tipped and tapering fingers, outside of the mantle which enwraps their owner. There are modes of rendering the yachmack opaque or transparent, by the manner of arranging its folds ; and it is easy to raise it more or less high upon the face, and to increase or diminish the space between it and the head-dress. Between these two lines of white, sparkle, like black diamonds or stars of jet, those most magnificent of all eyes in the world, whose brilliancy is even heightened by the tint of *k'hol* upon the lids, and which seem to concentrate in themselves the whole expression of that face, of which all the rest is concealed.

In walking slowly down the middle of the road, I was able to pass in review, at leisure, this whole gallery of Turkish beauties, as if I were inspecting a range of boxes at the Opera. My red fez and close-buttoned frock-coat, my long beard and embrowned complexion, rendered me scarcely distinguishable from the rest of the crowd, and prevented me from having an air too scandalously Parisian.

Upon the “turf” of Hyder-Pasha, many arabas moved gravely along, as well as many talikas, and not a few broughams and clarences ; all filled with richly-dressed women, whose diamonds sparkled in the sun, partly hidden by the masses of white muslin, like stars behind a light cloud. Cawas on foot or on horseback, attended many of these carriages, indicating that in those thus

attended, odalisques of the imperial harem were lazily seeking to dispel their *ennui* by a drive.

Here and there, little groups of five or six women lounged beneath the shade of a tree, guarded by a black eunuch, and within call of the araba which had conveyed them thither. The sellers of snow-water, sherbet, grapes, and cherries, passed from group to group, offering their merchandise to the Greeks and Armenians, and contributing to the animation of the scene.

Cavaliers, mounted upon fine horses, displayed their skill at some little distance from the carriages—doubtless in honour of some invisible beauty; the matchless steeds of Nedji, of Hedjaz, and of Kurdistan, proudly shaking their silky manes, and making the jewelled housings to sparkle and flash in the sunlight,—seemingly as conscious as their masters, of the admiration they excited. Occasionally, when a cavalier's back was turned, a fair head would be seen for an instant at the window of a talika, but would be as instantly withdrawn.

The sun sank, and I regained, in a strange, dreamy mood, the road to Scutari; where my caidji patiently awaited me, seated between a cup of coffee and a chibouque of latakia; as, indeed, he had every right to do, being a Christian Greek, and not subject to the rigorous restrictions of the Ramadan, which still reigned supreme throughout the territory of Islam.

XIV.

KARAGHEUZ.

I BEGIN to fear, in speaking thus perpetually of cemeteries, that I shall be mistaken for a travelling undertaker ; but it is not my fault ; and to-day, at least, I have nothing lugubrious in view.

I wish to take you to see “ *Karagheuz*,” the Turkish *Punch* ; and to reach his abode, we must traverse the Great Field of the Dead of Pera : but what to do there ? you will say ; for, after all, this is no melancholy personage whom we are about to visit.

After passing through nearly the whole length of the chief street of Pera, you reach a fountain, shaded by a cluster of plane-trees, near which are stationed men with horses to let, who assail you with cries of “ *Tchelebi*,—*Signor !*”—or “ *Monsieur !*” according as they are more or less polyglots. Around are also numerous *arabas*, waiting for employment ; and the eternal sellers of sherbet, iced-water, cucumbers, and cakes, always seeming to drive a brisk trade.

Groups of women, seated at the wayside, fix boldly upon the passers-by their large black eyes, and amuse themselves by watching the crowd of people of all nations, who come and go on foot, on horseback, on mules, on asses, and in carriages of all shapes and from all regions.

The signal-gun, which announces the setting of the

sun and the suspension of the fast, has just resounded through the town. The cafés begin to fill, and clouds of tobacco smoke to rise in every direction. *Tarboukas* are heard to rumble, tambourines to rattle, and flutes to shriek; while the nasal tones of the street singers augment the joyous clamour.

Upon the esplanade in front of the cavalry barrack, the fashionables begin to display their horsemanship; and the black eunuchs to prance about, upon superb steeds. They challenge each other to the race, with shrill cries, and gallop madly forward, regardless of the yellow and red dogs who lie sleeping in their pathway with an imperturbable fatalism.

In another quarter, children are playing at "cat," perched upon the flat tombs of Armenians or Greek Christians; which are deprived of all religious emblems, as if Mussulman earth barely tolerated the dead of a different creed. These philosophical *gamins* appeared, however, to trouble themselves very little about the fact that they were thronging a spot saturated with human dust; and displayed a vivacity of life and gaiety, which such a locality would have partially subdued, in any other country than Turkey.

The Little Field of Pera is a sort of Boulevard des Italiens; and (to sustain the parallel) the Great Field is the Bois de Boulogne of Paris, or the Hyde Park of London,—a place in which the Turkish beaux display their barbs, or English horses, and in which are paraded some few barouches, chariots, and broughams, imported from Paris, Vienna, or London. They might be more numerous, if the execrable pavements and narrow streets would permit; but, even as it is, they add greatly to the animation of the scene, and form striking contrasts with the clumsy forms, gaudy colours, and brilliant gilding of

the arabas—although the latter are much preferable in a pictorial point of view: one more illustration of the truism, that the picturesque is almost invariably attained by a sacrifice of the useful, the comfortable, or the practical.

Perhaps the dead, who sleep beneath the surrounding cypresses, prefer this bustle to the deep silence, the heavy solitude, and the cold abandonment, which isolate them elsewhere. Here they rest, amid their contemporaries, their friends, and their descendants, and are not removed from the common haunts of men as objects of disgust or horror. This familiarity, which may at first seem irreverent, is, after all, more tender and considerate than our superstitious reserve.

While waiting for the hour at which the representation of Karagheuz should commence, I smoked a chibouque and took a cup of coffee in a neighbouring café. This preliminary completed, I and my Constantinoplean friend traversed the cemetery, and reached a line of low wooden houses, which stood beneath a row of lofty cypresses, and formed one side of a street, of which the *other* side consisted of tombs.

At the door of one of these houses stood a lamp, formed by depositing a floating wick in a glass of oil—a mode of illumination much in use in Constantinople—and the house thus distinguished proved to be the scene of the evening's entertainment. We entered, after throwing a few piastres to an old Turk, who was seated near the door, beside a chest which represented at once the cash-box and the box-office.

The representation took place in a garden planted with trees. Low stools for the natives, and chairs of wicker-work for the giaours, supplied the place of boxes and stalls. The audience was numerous, and the smoke

from their chibouques and narghilés formed a cloudy canopy above their heads ; while the lighted pipe-bowls gleamed in the shade, as if the whole surface of the garden were sprinkled with live coals.

The blue sky of evening, spangled with stars, formed the ceiling of our theatre, and the moon played the part of chandelier ; while boys ran nimbly about serving cups of coffee and glasses of water,—*accompagnement-obligato* to every Turkish entertainment. Seats were provided for us in the front row, close to the stage, and beside some young rogues in tarbouches, whose long silk tassels hung half-way down their backs, like Chinese queues, and who were already laughing merrily in anticipation of the piece.

The theatre of “*Karagheuz*” is of a simplicity even more primitive than that of “*Punch*.” An angle of a wall, across which is extended a curtain of white linen lighted from behind, is all the fitting-up which is required ; a single lamp supplies the needful light, and a tambourine constitutes the orchestra. Nothing could be less complicated. The manager takes his stand in the area formed by the angle of the wall and the extended curtain, and amid the figures whose movements and language he directs.

The luminous ground upon which are to be projected the shadows (*silhouettes*) of the miniature actors, shines brightly in the growing darkness, and is the centre of many impatient regards. Presently a figure is interposed between the light and the curtain, and a coloured and semi-transparent shadow is thrown upon the shining surface. It is a Chinese pheasant perched upon a bush. The tambourine begins to rumble and growl, and a guttural voice chanting a strange poem, in a measure incomprehensible to European ears, rises upon the silence ; for at the appearance of the bird, the vague buzz of conver-

sation had ceased abruptly. This was the lifting of the curtain, and the overture.

The pheasant vanished, and gave place to a sort of scene, representing the exterior of a garden, enclosed by lattices and railings, above which appeared trees, very similar in form to those carved wooden ones which we find in boxes of German toys.

A hoarse shout of laughter now announced the entrance of Karagheuz, and a grotesque figure of some six or eight inches in height perched himself on the garden wall with a profusion of extravagant gestures.

Karagheuz is a very striking personage. His face, although seen only in silhouette, forms a very faithful caricature of the genuine Turk. His parrot-beaked nose curves over a black beard and projecting chin, and his physiognomy presents a mixture of stupidity, voluptuousness and cunning; as if he were at once Prud'homme, Don Juan, and Robert Macaire.

His head is covered by a turban of the most authentic "old style," which, however, he removes every moment as species of comic action, which is as invariably effective as the "root-too-too" of Punch. A jacket, a waistcoat of gaudy colours, and large trousers, complete his costume. His arms and legs are moveable.

He differs from the mere black forms of the "*ombres chinoises*," in being transparent and displaying various colours, like the figures of a magic lantern; and this description of the hero of the piece will serve to give an idea of all the other actors.

Like all approved princes of tragedy, Karagheuz has a confidant, named *Hadji-aivat*; an auxiliary who answers him impudently, and mocks him behind his back while waiting upon him; but, nevertheless, Karagheuz can no more be imagined without *Hadji-aivat*, than Orestes

without Pylades, Damon without Pythias, or Castor without Pollux; and their grotesque and quarrelsome duality pervades the entire piece. Hadji-aïvat has a form as slender as that of a sylph, and forms a strong contrast, with his grace and agility, to the ponderous and deliberate dignity of his chief.

The garden, outside of which the scene of the piece is laid, encloses a mysterious beauty,—a sort of *houri*, who has strangely fascinated the imagination and senses of Karagheuz. He is desirous to penetrate into this paradise, which is defended by ferocious guardians; and to effect that object, invents all sorts of stratagems, in which he is successively foiled. Now it is a eunuch who menaces him with his sabre; presently a ferocious dog, who barks outrageously, and fixes a fearfully sharp set of teeth in his calves;—while Hadja-aïvat, no less enamoured than his master, is constantly trying to substitute himself for Karagheuz, and to take the place in the lady's favour which his master seeks to obtain. He complicates the "situation" by all conceivable rascalities and treacheries, which cause continual altercations and contests between him and Karagheuz, and give perpetual action to the piece.

A third personage is introduced, at an early period, into the drama. It is a young man, in blue frock-coat and fez, like the attaché of an Ottoman embassy,—a young man of family. He holds in his hand a pot of basil—symbol of love, sincere and permanent; and Karagheuz benevolently counsels him how he may best prosecute his suit and obtain access to the object of his devotion,—in so doing making a mere tool of the poor youth, obtaining money from him, and finally seeking to obtain entrance to the garden of paradise in the train of the young *effendi*.

Certain Persians, attracted by the renown of the lady's beauty, come also to cool their heels at the garden gate;

arriving, mounted on spotted horses of a most ludicrous appearance. High Astracan caps of lambs'-wool surmount their heads, and they bear in their hands the invariable battle-axe of their nation. Karagheuz endeavours to make friends of these strangers; and "humbugs" them with a succession of lies, each more preposterous than the last, but all quite in keeping with the stupidity which the Turks habitually attribute to the Persians. Hadji-aivat has also sought to avail himself of the Persian influence; and being detected, receives a most miraculous shower of cuffs and kicks from his master. Meantime, the young lover is admitted to the harem, and the door slammed in the faces of the Persians; who revenge their discomfiture by pouncing unanimously upon Karagheuz and Hadji-aivat, thus creating a general fight, to the intense gratification of the audience, who reward the performance with shouts of laughter and applause.

Necessarily, my description is limited almost exclusively to the pantomimic portion of this "drama," my knowledge of Turkish being quite inadequate to the following of such a performance; but, as conveying an idea of the stage to which dramatic art and taste (?) have arrived in Turkey, the description is not without its value. It will be observed, that in this, as in their poetry and literature, their tastes are singularly primitive, and their appreciation limited to that species of narrative and incident which forms the delight of savages and of children.

The Turkish language offers peculiar facilities for puns, and every description of play upon words; the alteration of a single letter, or even a single accent, being sufficient to change entirely the sense of a word. Thus, *Asem* signifies Persian, and *asemi*, an idiot; and instead of saying *Asem-Baba*, (or Mr. Persian), Karagheuz never failed to say, *Asemi-Baba*, or, "you fool of a Persian;"

which of course called forth peals of laughter—the Persians filling, for the Turks, the place which Frenchmen do in English farce, or Englishmen in the French comedies. In fact, these poor Persians are the butt of all the jokes and all the mystifications of the Turkish story-tellers. Their style is parodied, their emphatic enunciation, stiff deportment, strange costume, and the superabundance of arms which they carry about them, are all made subjects of satire. It is very likely, that among the Persians the Turks are quizzed in return, by way of just compensation.

My polyglot friend translated for me, from time to time, the more striking passages of this piece; but it is quite impossible to convey any idea of its drollery by translation, and deprived of action.

It ought, however, to be mentioned, that, among other consequences of “the reform,” the performances of Karagheuz have been submitted to “the censorship;” and that much which was rather extreme in *action*, has been reduced to *words*, and the words themselves very freely excised; for, in truth, in its original form, the representation could hardly have been described to European readers; although, as performed before an audience, consisting entirely of men, and those men Turks, it used to be considered quite proper, and in no way censurable.

After the piece which I have thus imperfectly described, followed another, purely pantomimic, entitled, “The Nuptials of Karagheuz;” but until that has been also submitted to the censorship—which it seems, at least partially, to have escaped—I must defer a description of its details. I may remark, however, that it was rendered curious by the display of animals, and of furniture and house utensils of every kind, in the nuptial procession;

and by the crude and *outré* character, which all these pictures derive from the restrictions laid upon the plastic and pictorial arts by the prohibitions of the Koran. The result is, that all the pictorial and sculptorial representations in which Karagheuz indulges (he being the only Turk "licensed" to do anything of the kind) are as primitive, and as unlike nature, as those which we find in the sculptures of a thousand years ago, or the grotesque limnings which we see of the religious ceremonies of the Aztecs and central Americans.

I resumed my way towards Pera—at the termination of the performance—through a deserted part of the cemetery, and between two enormous rows of cypresses. The moon threw occasional streams of silver through the openings of the branches, and made the white and turbaned tombs look even more spectral than usual. A profound silence reigned throughout this funeral forest, broken only, occasionally, by the deep baying of some dog in the distance. I was more impressed, than ever before, with an appreciation of the funereal character and associations of the scene; and amid the breathless stillness, I could almost hear the beating of my heart—the only living thing amid this multitude of the dead—when, on a sudden, a deep and stern voice broke upon my startled ear, pronouncing, in French, the following phrase:—

"Pray, Monsieur, buy the last of my cakes!"

This inopportune offer of pastry, amid the depths of a cemetery, at midnight—that romantic hour, the hour of apparitions—had something about it at once grotesque and startling; while it, at the same time, alarmed and amused me. Could it be the ghost of some fellow-Parisian, who had died at Constantinople in pursuit of the noble art of confectionery, and who now rose to offer me the ghost of a tart or a cheese-cake? This seemed hardly probable:

and so, taking “heart of custard,” I marched towards the place whence the voice had issued.

A fat, most substantial, and unghostlike looking fellow became visible, carrying before him a large tray filled with pastry, and awaiting customers in this seemingly unsuitable locality. He spoke French (as it appeared) in consequence of having served for some years as *il Turco in Algieri*; but, disgusted with the profession of arms, had taken up the more peaceful vocation of this nocturnal traffic in tarts.

I purchased the very foundations of his establishment for about three-halfpence,—reserving the fruits of my purchase as a means of making peace with the belated dogs, whom I might encounter on my way home; and proceeded on my course.

The next day, in pursuance of my researches into Turkish dramatic literature, my friend proposed to me to descend to Top-Hané; where, in the back-garden of a café, we might see a performance of Karagheuz, which had *not* been subjected to “the censorship;” and which exhibited, therefore, all the freedom of its original conception.

The garden was full of people when we arrived. Children and little girls were there in particular abundance; and their appreciation and enjoyment of a performance much too gross for description, was by no means the least singular part of the exhibition.

Karagheuz is often sent for to perform in the harems; the females witnessing the exhibition from curtained and latticed “boxes” or enclosures; which is singularly at variance with the severity of restriction imposed upon the females throughout the Orient, and would seem to indicate—as has been so often alleged—that in their disbelief of the immortality of woman, and their degradation

of her to a position purely animal, the Turks care to secure only the persons of their females, and pay no regard whatever to the cultivation or degradation of their moral faculties.

After witnessing these performances, I sought to trace the origin of Karagheuz, to some "root" identical with that of *Punch*, or *Pickel-herring*, or *Polichinello*; but all my erudite researches were rendered useless, by the information, that Karagheuz is the caricature of a vizier of Saladin, notorious alike for his drolleries and his licentiousness; and as this explanation makes its hero a contemporary of the Crusaders, I did not think it worth while to press my inquiries farther,—this seeming to me an antiquity remote and venerable enough to satisfy the most exacting.

XV.

THE SULTAN AT THE MOSQUE.—A TURKISH DINNER.

It is the custom for the Sultan to go in state, every Friday, to one of the mosques, to perform his devotions in public. Friday, as every one knows, is to the Turks what Sunday is to the Christians, and Saturday to the Jews: a day specially consecrated to religious exercises; although it does not, with the Turks, involve a compulsory period of rest.

Every week, the Commander of the Faithful visits a different mosque. Saint-Sophia, the Suleimanieh, Sultan-Bajazet, Yeni-Djami, and the rest, being visited in rotation, according to a sequence arranged and known in advance.

Beside the fact, that to perform his devotions on the Friday in a mosque, is rigorously inculcated upon the Turk by the Koran; and that the Padischa, as the head of the religion, can least of all men omit that duty; there is, moreover, in the exercise of this official act of piety, a political utility and significance; because it proves, to the mass of the people, the continuance of the life of the Sultan, of which they have few other opportunities of assuring themselves; hidden as he is, during the entire week, in the mysterious solitudes of the seraglio, or of the secluded summer palaces on the shores of the Bosphorus.

By passing through the city on horseback, visible to every one, he gives evidence of his existence, both to his own people and to the representatives of foreign powers ; a precaution not altogether idle in a country like Turkey, where his sudden or violent death *might* not only occur, but might—but for this recurring appearance in public—be for some time concealed, for the purposes of political intrigue.

Sickness, even though severe, does not prevent the performance of this ceremony ; for Mahmoud I., son of Mustapha, actually died between the two gates of the seraglio, while returning from one of these Friday's ceremonies, to which he had been literally dragged, while with difficulty able to maintain his seat in the saddle, and rouged to conceal his death-like paleness.

The dragomans of the different hotels always know, on the previous evening, or early on the same morning, the mosque which the Sultan will visit during the day ; and I learned from the dragoman of the Hôtel de Byzance, that on this particular day the Sultan would go from the palace of Schiragan to the mosque of Medjidieh (situated close at hand) to perform his devotions.

As the distance is considerable from Dervish-Sohak to Schiragan, and the Turkish time exceedingly difficult for strangers to comprehend, it chanced that, when I arrived at the Medjidieh, bathed in perspiration, and partially cooked by the torrid sun of July, the royal procession had passed, and the Sultan was already reciting his prayers in the interior of the mosque. Still, there remained the resource of waiting until he had finished, and seeing him issue from the mosque on his return to the palace ; which would amount to exactly the same thing, as if I had seen him at first, with the addition of an intermediate hour passed outside the mosque, in the company of a number of

English, Americans, Germans, and Russians, waiting with the same object.

The Medjidieh, as above remarked, is contiguous to the palace of Schiragan, the front of which faces the Bosphorus, and which, on the other side, shows nothing but high walls surmounted by the chimneys of the kitchens, painted green, and disguised in the form of columns. It is quite modern, and its architecture is in no way remarkable; although, by its dazzling whiteness, it has a fine effect, in contrast with the deep blue of the Oriental sky.

The door of the mosque was open, and a glimpse could be obtained of the viziers, the pashas, and the other great officers of state, wearing tarbouches, their breasts blazing with gold embroidery, and broadened by large epaulettes; all executing, in spite of their obesity, the complicated pantomime of Oriental devotion. They knelt and rose ponderously, by turns, with a piety which seemed sincere; and it must be added, that philosophical or sceptical ideas have made far less progress at Constantinople than would be expected; and this, too, even among those Turks who have been educated in Europe,¹ and who, on their return home, seem to recover their attachment to the Koran. In fact, it is necessary to scrape but very slightly the varnish with which civilisation has overlaid them, to find underneath the faithful believer and Mussulman.

In front of the mosque, numerous grooms and black slaves were leading up and down magnificently caparisoned horses, which had brought thither the Sultan and his suite.

¹ The author habitually uses the word "*European*" in contradistinction to "Turkish" or "Mahometan;" and, although not always strictly correct, when speaking of events which occur in "*Turkey in Europe*," it is so generally received in common parlance, that I have followed the author's example, in this particular, throughout the book.—TRANS.

They were fine animals, robust, solid, lacking something of the nervous elegance of the Arabian horses, but seemingly capable of bearing great fatigue. The slight horses of the desert would sink beneath the weight of these massive riders; for the most part of excessive stoutness, especially among the higher grades. These horses are of the "barb" species, but seem to form a class by themselves. The steed of the Sultan was easily distinguishable by the precious stones which blazed upon his housings, and the recurrence of the imperial cypher, the complicated arabesque of which, embroidered in gold, sufficed almost entirely to hide the velvet of the trappings.

Lines of soldiers were ranged along the walls, awaiting the appearance of his Highness. They wore the red tarbouch, and their uniform somewhat resembled the undress of the French troops of the line, consisting of a round jacket of blue cloth, and large trousers of coarse white linen. This costume, which is almost that of a French peasant lad, formed a strange contrast to the stern faces, heavy beards, and bronzed complexions of the wearers, to whom the massive turban of the janissaries would have been much more suitable.

Upon the steps of the mosque was extended a narrow strip of black cachemere, for the passage of the Sultan. It led from the door, following the steps of the portico, to a mounting-block of marble, such as are found also near the doors of the palaces, and the landing-places for the caiques. It appears to me (although I cannot assert it positively) that this black carpet is affected by the Sultan, in assertion of his right as Grand Khan of Tartary, of which dignity that colour is the sign.

The genuflexions, prostrations, and psalmodes continued in the interior of the sanctuary, while the mid-day sun, constantly foreshortening the shadow, made the flagstones

and gravel of the street fairly to blaze with heat and light, which were again reflected with blinding fervour from the white walls around. This was all the more distressing to three or four European ladies who were there, because etiquette forbids the opening of a parasol in presence of the Sultan, or even in front of the palace which he inhabits. In the East, the parasol has always been the emblem of supreme power. The master is in the shade, while the slaves broil in the sun. The Turkish rigour is relaxed on this point, as on all others ; and one would not run, at present, in disregarding this usage, the risks which would formerly have attended it ; but all foreigners of good breeding conform, nevertheless, to its requirements. Why should we clash with the habits or customs of the countries which we visit,—habits which have their reasons for existing, and often are, at bottom, no more ridiculous than our own ?

At last, a movement is perceptible within the mosque. The officers resume their shoes, or slippers, at the entrance. The grooms lead the Sultan's horse to the mounting-stone ; and, presently—between two lines of viziers, pashas, and beys, bending and saluting in the Oriental fashion—appears his Highness the Sultan, Abdul-Medjid ; his figure clearly defined against the sombre tints of the door-way, the outline of which surrounded him like a frame.

His costume—exceedingly simple—consisted of a sort of surtout or paletot, of deep blue ; white trousers ; patent-leather boots ; and a fez, in which the imperial aigrette of heron's feathers was fastened by a button of enormous diamonds ; while, through the opening of his paletot, a glimpse was obtained of an under-coat, richly embroidered in gold.

For my part, I regret sincerely the loss of the ancient Asiatic magnificence. I admired the unapproachable

Sultans ;—installed, like idols, in shrines of precious stones,—a kind of peacocks of power, displaying themselves amid a galaxy of stars. In a country governed by despotic power, the sovereign cannot too far separate himself from common humanity, by solemn and imposing forms ; by a luxury, dazzling, chimerical, and almost fabulous. He should be seen by his people, only through an atmosphere blazing with gold and diamonds.

Meantime, despite the austere simplicity of his dress, the rank of Abdul-Medjid could have been mistaken by no one. A supreme satiety could be read in his pale countenance : the consciousness of supreme power gave to his features—otherwise not strikingly regular—a tranquillity like that of marble. His eyes, fixed and unvarying in expression,—at once dull and piercing,—seeing everything and looking at nothing,—did not seem to resemble the eyes of a human being ; while a short beard, thick and brown, enclosed this mask,—sad, imperious, and yet soft.

In a few steps, taken with extreme slowness, rather as if gliding than walking,—the steps of a god or a phantom, moving by other than the usual human process,—Abdul-Medjid crossed the space which separated the door of the mosque from the mounting-block of marble ; following the strip of black upon which no one save himself presumed to tread ; and seemed rather to sink than to mount, to the saddle of the horse which stood awaiting him, immovable as a sculptured steed. The great (and large) officers raised themselves, somewhat more laboriously, on to the backs of their respective animals, and the procession began to move towards the palace, amid loud cries of “Long live the Sultan !” shouted in Turkish by the soldiers, with genuine and unmistakeable enthusiasm.

By quickening my pace a little, I was enabled to pass before the cortége, and place myself somewhat in advance,

in a position to gain another view of his Highness. I gave my arm to a young Italian lady, who had begged me to escort her, and who peered eagerly through the line of guards to observe the features of the Sultan; for a man who has sixteen hundred wives, is a phenomenon that interests in the highest degree the curiosity of all women.

The Sultan—whose horse advanced slowly, gracefully arching his superb neck, like that of a swan, and as if proud of the burden he bore—the Sultan observed the stranger, and fixed upon her for some seconds his eagle eyes, at the same time turning almost imperceptibly towards her his impassive countenance; this being the manner in which the Sultan salutes those whom he chooses to honour; a distinction, however, bestowed very rarely indeed.

During this procession, the band played a march, arranged from Turkish airs by the brother of Donizetti (leader of the Sultan's musical staff), and blended with enough of the tambourine and the flute of the dervish, to satisfy Mahometan ears without outraging those of Europeans. This march was pleasing, and by no means wanted character.

Presently the whole cortege entered the palace, the open gate of which gave a partial view of a vast court surrounded by buildings of modern style; but in a moment the massive gates reclosed, and there remained in the street but a few lingering spectators, dispersing rapidly in different directions; a few Bulgarian peasants, in their huge overcoats and furred caps, and some withered old mendicants, crouched amid their rags along the front of the walls, glowing and blazing beneath the noontide.

Utter silence reigned around this mysterious palace, which, behind its trellised windows, encloses so much of languor and of ennui; and I could not forbear to think of all the wealth of loveliness thus lost to human sight; the

marvellous types of Grecian, Circassian, Georgian, and Indian beauty, which fade there, without having been reproduced or perpetuated, by the pencil or the chisel, but which should have been immortalised in marble or on canvas, and bequeathed to the loving admiration of ages: Venuses, who will never have a Praxiteles; Violantés, without a Titian; and Fornarinas, to whom no Raphael will ever be known.

What a prize in the great lottery of life is that drawn by the Padischa? What the deuce is Don Juan beside the Sultan? A poor seeker of low adventures,—as often deceived as deceiving; pursuing lady-loves, who have had husbands and lovers,—whose countenances have been seen by the world, and whose forms are known to the general eye!

Speak to me of the Padischa!—the Sultan!—who gathers only the purest lilies, the most immaculate roses, of the garden of beauty; and whose eye rests only upon forms the most perfect, never sullied by mortal gaze;—forms which pass from the cradle to the tomb, guarded by sexless monsters, in those magnificent solitudes which the boldest dare not seek to penetrate; and surrounded by a mystery and seclusion which offers no scope to even the most vague desire!

I had, at this time, changed my lodging; having found that which I occupied at Dervish-Sobak rather too melancholy, and possessing no other “view” than that of one street, narrow and dirty, like all others in Constantinople. I had removed to the Hôtel de France, where, from a large saloon with eight windows, and furnished with a long divan, I could see the Little Field of Pera, the roofs and minarets of Kassim-Pasha, and the heights of Saint Demetrius,—a prospect which might perhaps seem rather

lugubrious at Paris, but gay enough at Constantinople. In this hotel I had made the acquaintance of a young man, whose medical studies, and the perfection with which he spoke the Eastern languages, gave him great facilities for finding his way into the houses of the Turks, and becoming acquainted with their domestic manners. He had been a reader of "*La Presse*," and a great admirer of M. de Girardin; and my name, known by him as that of an author, caused him to interest himself in my excursions and my researches; and to him I owed the good fortune of receiving an invitation to dine with an Ex-Pasha of Kurdistan,—a friend of my friend.

We started together, about six o'clock in the afternoon, in order to reach Beschick-Tash, where the Pasha resided, at sunset; because, being still in the Ramadan, the fast was rigorously maintained, until the orb of day had disappeared behind the hills of Eyoub.

At the quay of Top-Hané we took a caique, with two pair of oars; and after a vigorous pull of half an hour, against a rapid current, our caidjis landed us at the foot of the café overhanging the water, of which I have once before spoken, and which was now crowded with Turks, waiting, watch in hand, and chibouque full-charged, the precise minute when they could raise to their lips the happy mouth-piece of amber, and inhale the fragrant fume of "the weed."

After crossing several streets crowded with the shops of pipe-bowl makers, confectioners, dealers in cucumbers and other oriental wares, and all thronged with crowds of people, we began to climb a silent street, formed by the walls of large private gardens, at the summit of which was perched the house of the ex-Pasha of Kurdistan.

A gate, which was just closing as we passed, allowed us to see an elegant brougham entering its coach-house.

It was the carriage of the Pasha's wife, who had just returned from a drive ; for, contrary to the European idea, the Turkish ladies, far from remaining walled-up in the harems, go out when they please, on the sole condition of remaining closely veiled ; and their husbands never think of accompanying them.

A low door, approached by a flight of three steps, was opened to us by a domestic in European dress (all except the invariable red cap) ; and, after having changed our shoes for slippers, which we had taken the precaution to bring with us, we were shown up to the first-floor, where is situated the *selamlick*, or mens' apartment ; always separated from the apartment of the women (the *odalick*), in Turkish houses, rich or poor, large or small.

We found the ex-Pasha in a very plain room, with a wooden ceiling, painted gray and relieved by stripes of blue ; and having, for furniture, only two cupboards, a straw mat, and a divan covered with Persian silk ; at the extremity of which last was seated the master of the house, passing through his fingers a chaplet of sandal-wood.

The corner of the divan is the place of honour, which the master of the house never resigns, unless he is visited by some one of rank superior to his own.

To explain this extreme simplicity, it is proper to mention, that the *selamlick* is, in a manner, an external apartment—an ante-chamber, beyond which strangers never pass, and which is reserved for the public part of the life of the Turk. All the luxury is confined to the harem. It is there that are displayed the carpets of Ispahan or Smyrna ; there are spread the embroidered tapestries ; there stretch the soft divans of silk, and shine the little inlaid tables of pearl and agate ; there burn rich perfumes, in censers of gold and silver filigree ; there

bloom the rarest of flowers ; and there gleam, like stalactites, the superb chimney-pieces of marble of Marmora, and the fountains of perfumed water, which diffuse, at once, freshness and melody. In that mysterious retreat passes the real and actual life—the life of pleasure and of intimacy ; and there no relative, and no friend, can ever penetrate.

The ex-Pasha wore the fez, the buttoned frock-coat of the Nizam, and loose white trousers. His face, fine and hard in outline but with a slight air of weariness, was terminated by a beard in which some few gray hairs had already appeared, and had an air of distinction about it, that was not to be mistaken. In fact, to use an English expression, the Pasha had the air of “a perfect gentleman.”¹

My friend interpreted to him my salutations, to which he responded most cordially and graciously, and subsequently made me a sign to sit beside him. The readiness with which I crossed my legs like a Turk,—a movement not so easily learned by a European,—made him smile, and evidently gave him a good opinion of me.

The day began to decline ; the last orange tints of sunset were fading from the sky, when the thrice-blessed signal gun reverberated joyously through the evening air. The fast was ended for the day, and the servants appeared, bringing pipes, glasses of water, and sweetmeats ; this light collation serving to indicate that the faithful can legally begin to take food.

Presently afterwards, they placed before the divan a large disk of brass, carefully polished and shining like a shield of gold, upon which they arranged different meats, in porcelain dishes. These disks, supported by one low foot, serve for tables ; and three or four persons can easily be

¹ The author uses the foregoing phrase in the original.—TRANS.

accommodated around one of them. Table-linen is a luxury unknown in the East. They eat without table-cloth or napkin; but give you, to dry your fingers, little squares of embroidered muslin, fringed with gold, and closely resembling what the English call “d’oyleys;” a precaution by no means unnecessary, because you use, at these repasts, no knives or forks except those known to Father Adam.

In this case the Pasha, foreseeing my embarrassment, had most considerately caused me to be supplied with a silver spoon; but I declined it, being resolved to conform myself, in all such particulars, to the usages of the country.

Doubtless, in the estimation of the masters of the art of European cookery, the Turkish condition and style of culinary art would appear utterly barbarous and patriarchal; but their dishes are not devoid of skill in preparation, nor by any means made at random. They are very numerous, and succeed each other rapidly; and the custom is, to take, with the fingers, a few mouthfuls from each dish. They consist of morsels of mutton; dismembered fowls; fish dressed in oil; cucumbers, in various fashions; balls of rice wrapped in vine-leaves, and pancakes with honey; the whole sprinkled with rose water, slightly dashed with mint and aromatic herbs, and the banquet being crowned with the sacred “*pilau*,” a dish as rigorously national as the *puchero* of Spain, the *couscoussou* of the Arabs, the *saur-kraut* of Germany, or the *plum-pudding* of England; and which figures, compulsorily, in all Turkish repasts, in palace or in cottage. For drink, we had water, sherbet, and syrup of cherries; which last we dipped from a dish, with a tortoise-shell spoon furnished with an exquisitely-carved handle of ivory.

The meal ended, the brazen table was removed, and water brought for washing (an indispensable ceremony,

when one has dined with no other “plate” than his ten fingers); then coffee was served, and the *chibouckdjî* presented to each guest a superb pipe, with an exquisite mouth-piece of amber, and a stem of cherry-wood as glossy as satin; each pipe being supplied with a tuft of Macedonian tobacco, and placed upon a little plate of metal, laid on the floor, to preserve the mat from the sparks or ashes which might fall from the lighted bowl.

The conversation was as animated as it well could be, when two of the three composing the party were obliged to make an interpreter of the third. The ex-Pasha seemed quite familiar with European politics, and overwhelmed me with a mass of questions about certain leading events. He was especially anxious about the *coup d'état* of December 2nd, of which he highly approved; the abstract idea of a Republic, being very difficult to introduce into a brain fashioned beneath an oriental despotism.

He wished to know if the Emperor had many cannon, and commanded a large number of troops; what dress he wore; if he rode well on horseback, and if he was likely to engage in wars as freely as his uncle, “*Bounaberdi*,” if I was acquainted with him, or had spoken with him; and innumerable other questions of a similar kind;—which I answered as I best could. The brother of the Pasha, seated near him, and who knew some words of French, seemed to follow the conversation with much interest.

The servants removed the pipes. The ex-Pasha rose, and retired to perform his devotions, kneeling on a piece of carpet in an adjoining room; and returned, in a few minutes, calm and grave, after discharging his religious duty as became a good Mussulman. We exchanged a few words more; and when we took leave, the Pasha told me to come again whenever it should please me to do so, and

that I should be always welcome; a phrase which, from the lips of a Turk, is no idle formula.

As we went out, we spoke a few words with the secretary, who was installed in an apartment on the ground-floor. He was a young man of exceedingly good manners—probably an Armenian,—who spoke French fluently.

We found our caidjis awaiting us at Beschick-Tash. They soon conveyed us to Top-Hané, where we stopped at a café frequented by Circassians. My friend translated their conversation; and, to my amazement, I found them speaking of the politics of England and France, and even of the individual ministers of either country, with a perfect knowledge of the subject.

While they thus talked politics, a little dervish came by, chanting a nasal canticle, with a tone and manner impossible to any European organ, and soliciting charity,—a circumstance that brought me back to the East, which I had quite forgotten, in hearing the Circassians, who were talking like the regular subscribers to the “*Journal des Débats*” or the “*Times*.”

XVI.

THE WOMEN.

THE first question, invariably addressed to every traveller on his return from the East, is : “ Well, and the women ? ” To which each responds by a smile, more or less mysterious and significant, according to his degree of fatuity, and the character of the inquirer ; but always implying, with more or less distinctness, that he has encountered more of romantic adventures than he thinks fit to recount to everybody.

Whatever it may cost my self-love, I humbly avow that *I* have, in this particular, “ no story to tell ; ” but am compelled, to my great regret, to send forth my narrative, devoid of all incident of love or romance. A few such, would certainly have served admirably to vary my descriptions of cemeteries, mosques, tekkés, palaces, and kiosks. Nothing is more charming in an Eastern tale, than to read, how an old woman, in a deserted street, made you a sign to follow her cautiously, and at a distance ; and introduced you, by a secret door, into an apartment heaped with all the luxuries of the Orient, where, reclining upon a superb divan, a sultana, gleaming with jewels,—which, however, paled beside her superb loveliness,—impatiently awaited your coming, and received you with smiles of tenderness and welcome. In due course, the adventure should terminate by the sudden arrival of the master, who scarcely leaves you time to

fly by the back-door; unless, indeed, a more tragical climax is attained, by a contest from which you barely escape with life, and the plunge into the Bosphorus, at dead of night, of a sack which bears some vague resemblance to the human form.

This orthodox narrative of Eastern adventure, slightly varied in details, always passes current, and interests all readers; and more especially, all “fair readers;” and doubtless, it is not entirely without precedent, that a young Giaour, handsome, rich, knowing thoroughly the language of the country, and residing in his own house in the Turkish fashion, should, with great peril to himself and absolute danger to the life of the lady, have an intrigue with a Turkish woman; but if such a thing occurs, it is very rarely indeed, and this for many and obvious reasons. First, the bolts and the gratings, which intervene between the females and the rest of the world, are tangible and unmistakeable obstacles; then, the difference of religion, and the unconquerable suspicion, with which every Turk—the women not excepted—instinctively regards all unbelievers; not to mention the difficulty, or almost impossibility, of that previous acquaintance, which might awaken a mutual regard between the parties.

Besides this, it is to be remarked, that in most European countries, the world at large are rather disposed to connive and smile at any “flirtation” which is observed, even though the lady be a married woman; while in Turkey, a cawas, a hammal, any man, of even the lowest grade, who should observe a Mahometan woman speaking in the street to a Frank, or even exchanging the slightest sign of intelligence with him, would literally fall upon her, with hand, foot, and cudgel, and be warmly applauded for such brutality, by any casual spectators, especially among the women. No one, here, understands the remotest

approach to raillery, on the subject of conjugal infidelity. The purely material jealousy of the Turks, and the precautions which it involves, protect them, almost invariably, from any cause of domestic scandal ; although jocose allusions to the subject are made familiarly enough in the theatre of our friend Karagheuz, and in the course of the comic disputes incidental to his performances.

It is true, that the Turkish women go out freely, take their walks and drives to the Valley of Sweet Waters, to Hyder-Pasha, or to the Place of Sultan-Bajazet ; seat themselves beside the tombs of the Little Fields of Pera or Scutari ; pass entire days at the bath, or in visits to their friends ; talk beneath the porticos of the mosques ; lounge in the shops of the Bezestin ; and sail, in caiques or steamers, upon the waters of the Bosphorus ; but they have always some companion, be it a negress, or an old woman in the capacity of duenna, or, if they are rich, a eunuch, often more jealous than his master. If they are not thus accompanied,—which exception is rare,—a child, led by the hand, insures them respect ; or even in default of this protection, the tone of public manners watches over them, and “ protects ” them, perhaps, a little more rigorously than they altogether care about. The excessive liberty of action which they enjoy is only apparent.

Foreigners have sometimes fancied themselves beloved by a Turkish woman, when they have, in fact, confounded the Armenians with the Turks, whose costume they wear, except the yellow boots, and whose manners and allurements they imitate so closely, as to deceive any but a resident of the country. For this, it suffices to have an old woman, who arranges her plans with a pretty young Armenian coquette, a rather credulous and romantic young man, and a rendezvous in a lonely house. Vanity does the rest ; and the adventure generally terminates in the

extortion of a sum of money;—an insignificant circumstance, omitted from the subsequent narrative of the deluded Giaour, who imagines in his heroine at least the favourite slave of a Pasha, if not one of the harem of the Grand Seigneur himself.

But, in real truth, the actual Turkish life is not less “hermetically sealed” than we have always supposed; and it is very difficult to even conjecture what passes behind those closely-trellised windows, the only view through which is that from within; each being furnished with a sort of bull’s-eye, to enable those on the inner-side to command a perfect view of all that passes without, while they themselves remain rigorously invisible.

Nor is it of any use to think of obtaining information from the natives of the country. As the author says at the commencement of “*Namouna*”—

“Utter silence reigns throughout this narrative.”

To speak to a Turk of the females of his household, is to commit the grossest possible breach of etiquette and politeness. It is forbidden to make the slightest allusion, even indirectly, to this delicate subject; and, of course, all such phrases as “How is madam, to-day?” (common-place as they are to us) are quite banished from conversation. The most ferociously-bearded and turbaned Turk would blush like a school-girl, if he heard an inquiry so outrageously improper.

The Ambassadors of France, wishing to make a present to Redschid Pasha, of some superb Lyons silks, for the ladies of his harem, sent them to him with this brief note:—“Pray accept some silks, which you will know better than any one how to use.” To have expressed more plainly the object of the gift, would have been bad taste, even in the eyes of Redschid Pasha, despite his familiarity with French manners; and the exquisite tact

of the Marchioness caused her to adopt a form of expression so gracefully vague, as could not wound even the sensitive susceptibility of an Oriental.

It is, therefore, easy to understand, that it would be singularly unbecoming to ask from a Turk any details as to the habits or customs of the harem, or the character and manners of the women. Even though he may have known you familiarly at Paris, have taken two hundred cups of coffee, and smoked an equal number of pipes on the same divan with you, he will, nevertheless, if you question him on this subject, stammer and hesitate, and evade your inquiries in every possible manner. Civilisation, in this particular, has not advanced a single step. The only method to employ, in order really to obtain any authentic information, is to request some European lady, who is well introduced and has access to the harems, to recount to you faithfully that which she has seen. For a man, he may as well abandon, at once, the idea of knowing anything more of the Turkish beauties than he is able to gather from the glimpses which he may snatch, by surprise, from beneath the awning of an araba, through the window of a talika, or beneath the shade of the cypresses of the cemetery, at some moment when heat or solitude has caused a momentary and partial withdrawing of the veil.

Still, if one approaches too boldly, even under such circumstances,—and especially if there chance to be any Turk within hearing,—he draws upon himself a shower of such compliments as the following:—"Dog of a Christian!—Miscreant!—Giaour!—May the birds of the air soil your beard!—May the plague dwell in your house!—May your wife be childless!" The last being a Biblical and Mahometan malediction, of the utmost severity. It may, however, be suspected, that this fury is more affected

than real, and is, in great part, a piece of acting "for the gallery;" for a woman, even though a Turk, is seldom displeased at being admired; and among the Moslem women, the secret of their beauty, no doubt, weighs somewhat upon their minds (as any other secret would do upon any female mind), and they are not sorry to have an occasional confidant, of that sex which is best able to appreciate the value of the disclosure.

By the "Sweet-waters of Asia,"—by leaning immovably against a tree, or the fountain, in the attitude of one who is lost in profound reverie,—I have been able to catch a glimpse of more than one lovely face, but imperfectly concealed by a thin veil of gauze half-withdrawn, and more than one snowy throat, gleaming between the folds of a half-open feredge, while the eunuch was walking at a little distance, or gazing upon the steamboats on the Bosphorus, assured by my assumed air of drowsiness and abstraction.

The Turks, however, see no more of them than do the Giaours. They never pass beyond the Selamlick, even in the houses of their most intimate friends; and they are acquainted with no females but those of their own harems. When the inmates of one harem visit those of another, the well-known custom of placing the slippers of the visitors upon the threshold of the harem which they are visiting, at once announces the presence of strangers, and interdicts the entrance of the odalick, even to its own master; who thus finds himself, at any moment, shut out from a part of his own house. An immense female population—anonymous and unknown—circulates through this mysterious city, which is thus transformed into a sort of vast masquerade,—with the peculiarity, that the dominoes are never permitted to unmask. The father and the brother are the only males who are allowed to behold the faces of



FOUNTAIN NEAR THE SWEET-WATERS OF ASIA.

their daughters and sisters, who rigidly veil themselves for any relative of remoter degree ; and thus a Turk may, in his whole life, have seen but half-a-dozen faces of Moslem women !

The possession of large and numerous harems is restricted to viziers, pashas, beys, and other persons of either great wealth or high rank, for their maintenance is enormously expensive; especially as each female who becomes a mother, is entitled to her separate apartments and her own suite of slaves. The Turks of middle rank have rarely more than one wife (although legally entitled to espouse four), together with perhaps three or four purchased female slaves ; and, for them, the rest of the sex remains in the condition of a myth or chimera. It is true, that they can compensate themselves by looking at the women of other races—the Greeks, Jewesses, and Armenians, together with the few European ladies who extend their travels so far ; but of the females of their own people, they know absolutely nothing beyond the walls of their own harems.

The sentiment of love and the delicacies of courtship are, necessarily, almost unknown to the Moslemah. A Turk who wishes to marry has recourse to some woman of mature age, who exercises the profession of a matrimonial negotiator. This woman frequents the baths, and gives him a minute description of the personal charms of a certain number of Asmés, Rouchens, Nourmahals, Leilas, and other beauties of marriageable age ; taking proper care, of course, to adorn with the greatest profusion of metaphors the portrait of the young girl whom she herself favours, or whom it is her interest to select. The Effendi becomes a lover on the strength of her description ; sprinkles with hyacinths the path by which his veiled idol must pass ; and, after the interchange of a few glances

(his share of which is limited to such glimpses of a pair of eyes as he can snatch through the close-drawn veil), demands the maiden of her father, offering her a dowry proportioned to his passion and his fortune ; and at length sees removed, for the first time in the nuptial chamber itself, the yachmack which has hitherto concealed the fair one's features from his longing gaze.

These marriages by procuration, do not appear to give room for much more of mistake or deception, than those which take place among us.

It were easy to transcribe here, from the works of preceding travellers, a mass of details about the sultanas, the odalisques, and the internal economy of the harem ; but the books from which I should copy are before the world ; and I prefer to pass to something rather more precise, and to draw "a Turkish interior," from the sketch given me by a lady, who was invited to dine with the wife of that ex-Pasha of Kurdistan, whose guest I had already been.

The Pasha's wife had been in the imperial seraglio, before marrying the Pasha. When they attain the age of thirty years, the Sultan gives permission to certain of his slaves to marry ; and they can always form most desirable alliances, on account of the relations which they are—or are supposed to be—able to maintain with the palace, and the honour which attaches to their having formed a part of the imperial household.

Besides this, they are always well educated ; knowing how to read, write, make verses, dance, and play upon musical instruments ; and have also the stately manners, which are supposed to be acquired at court only. They usually possess, moreover, both the skill and habit of political cabal and intrigue ; and often learn, through their friends who remain in the harem, state secrets, of

which their husbands avail themselves to win a favour or avoid a disgrace. To marry a daughter of the seraglio is, therefore, a very politic measure for an ambitious and calculating man.

The apartment in which the Pasha's wife received her guest, was both rich and elegant, and formed a strong contrast to the plain severity of the selamlick, which I have described in the preceding chapter. Three sides of the room were furnished with windows, so arranged as to admit the utmost possible amount of air and light. A European conservatory would be the best illustration of this apartment; and in *that*, too, they guard the loveliest and rarest of flowers. The floor was covered by a superb Smyrna carpet, upon which the heaviest foot would fall noiselessly; the ceiling was decorated with coloured and gilded arabesques; a long divan, of yellow and blue satin, ran along two entire sides of the room, and another very low divan stood between two windows, from which was seen a splendid view of the Bosphorus in full perspective.

In one corner shone a beautiful emerald-coloured ewer of Bohemian glass, placed upon a plateau of the same material, both being richly gilded; while in the other angle was placed a chest, or large casket of leather, chased, inlaid and gilded in the most perfect taste. Strangely at variance, however, with this air of oriental luxury, was a sort of table or chest of drawers of mahogany, the marble slab of which was surmounted by a clock in *ormolu*, covered by a glass shade, and standing between two vases of artificial flowers, also under glass; the whole being neither more nor other, than one of those French clocks, with its supporters, which you will find on the mantelpiece of every respectable burgher in the department of the Seine. These discrepancies abound in all those Turkish houses which make any pretension to "good taste;" that

is, those which ape the civilised and European fashions of "the reform," and destroy the harmony of the fine old Turkish luxury and massive wealth of decoration, without having the skill to introduce the substituted style in perfection.

Next to this charming apartment was another, very plainly furnished, which served for a dining-room, and communicated with the staircase which led to the domestic offices.

The *Khanoun* was sumptuously dressed, as the Turkish ladies always are, even at home; especially when they expect visitors. Her black hair, divided into an infinity of small plaits, fell upon her shoulders and over her cheeks. Her head shone as if it were decked with a casket of diamonds; for around a little cap of blue satin, were twined quadruple strings of brilliants of the finest water, covering the cap almost entirely, and sparkling with wonderful lustre.

Her neck was encircled by a necklace of large pearls, and her chemisette of silk, half-open, gave to view a lovely throat, and the outline of a bust which owed nothing to the aid of the corset; that instrument of torture being unknown in the East, or replaced only by the bowstring or bastinado. She wore a dress of dark ruby-coloured silk, open in front like a pelisse, looped up at each side to the knee, and forming behind a train, like that of a court-dress. This dress was trimmed with white ribbon, formed at intervals into rosettes; while an exquisite Persian shawl encircled her waist, and confined a pair of flowing trousers of white silk, the folds of which overhung her tiny slippers of yellow morocco, leaving nothing of them visible, but the points of the toes, long and turned up in the Chinese fashion.

She received her visitor very gracefully, and placed

her beside herself on the divan (after having first offered her a chair, if she should chance to prefer it); and then examined curiously, but not discourteously, the European lady's dress; frankly, in fact, and without affectation; as a well-bred person, anywhere, may examine objects which are confessedly strange.

The "conversation," between persons not speaking the same language, was necessarily limited to pantomime, and could not have much variety. The Turkish lady inquired of the European "if she had any children;" and made her understand that she herself was, to her great regret, deprived of that happiness.

When the dinner-hour arrived, they passed into the neighbouring apartment, similarly surrounded with divans, and the servants brought the small table of polished brass, supplied with dishes very similar to those with which I had been served when I dined with the Pasha; except that the dishes of meat were fewer in proportion, and those of confectionery more numerous and more varied.

A favourite female slave of the Khanoun partook of the repast, seated beside her mistress. She was a fine girl of seventeen or eighteen years of age; lively, healthful, and superbly developed in person; but very inferior in race and breeding to the ex-odalisque of the seraglio. She had large black eyes, somewhat heavy brows, red lips, and full cheeks; and, in fact, a bloom of somewhat rude and rustic health upon her countenance.

A mulatto girl, of a fine bronze complexion, with a white scarf gracefully wound about her head, in the form of a turban, stood, with bare feet, near the door, and received the dishes from the hands of the servant, who brought them to her from the kitchen below.

After dinner, the *Cadine* rose, and led the way again into the saloon, where she presently smoked a cigarette,

instead of the traditionary narghilé; which, in fact, is being to a great extent superseded among the Turkish ladies, by the cigarette; the latter having become "quite the fashion," until they are smoked almost as universally at Constantinople as at Seville. It is, in fact, a wonderful amusement and resource for the women, to employ their delicate fingers in pulling the long threads of the latakia, and rolling them into the neat little *cigarettes en papillote*, which they subsequently occupy themselves in smoking.

The master of the house now came to pay a visit to his wife and her European visitor; but on hearing his approach, the female slave fled with extreme precipitation; for, it appeared that she belonged strictly to the lady, and being already promised in marriage, could not appear with uncovered face before the ex-Pasha; who, by the way, like many other of his countrymen, had but one wife.

After the lapse of a few minutes, the Pasha retired to perform his devotions, and the Khanoun recalled her slave.

The hour of departure had arrived, and the stranger rose to take leave; when her hostess made a sign to her to wait for a moment, and whispered a few words to the young slave at her side, who immediately began to ransack the drawers in search of something, which she presently produced, and which the Pasha's wife handed to her guest as a souvenir of the pleasant evening passed together.

Courtesy forbade the visitor to examine the gift, while still in presence of her hostess; but from the care with which it was encased in a delicate little *ecrin* of morocco, she could not doubt that it was some rare object of oriental taste or skill.

On reaching her own apartment, she immediately opened the case, and found within the object which the Pasha's lady had selected as a choice memorial for her

fair visitor. It was a little glass bottle, bearing an engraved and gilded paper, on which was inscribed the following legend: "Extrait pour le Mouchoir: Paris, Miel;" while a similar scroll upon the reverse, displayed: "Extrait double, qualité garantie de miel: L. T. Piver, 103 Rue Saint-Martin, Paris."

XVII.

THE TERMINATION OF THE FAST.

I HAVE repeatedly written the word "caïque," in this narrative ; and indeed it would be difficult to avoid doing so in speaking of Constantinople ; but I do not remember that I have given anything like a precise description of the thing itself, although it is well worthy of it ; for the caïque is, assuredly, the most graceful vessel that ever rippled the blue waters of the sea.

Beside the Turkish caïque, the Venetian gondola, elegant enough in itself, is but a fisherman's skiff ; and the gondoliers are but vulgar watermen, compared to the superb *caïdjis*.

The caïque is a boat of some fifteen or twenty feet in length, by three in width ; shaped like a skate, and terminating at each extremity in such a form as to be rowed in either direction with equal facility. The sides are formed of two long boards, carved on the inside to represent foliage, flowers, fruits, knots of ribbon, and other delicate ornaments. Two or three other boards, carved into open-work, intersect the boat laterally, and support the sides against the pressure of the water, while a sort of iron beak arms the prow.

All of this is executed in beech-wood, waxed or varnished, and relieved sometimes by bands of gilding ; and is of an elegance and neatness not to be surpassed.

The caidjis, who pull each a pair of oars, sit upon a low cross bench, which is covered with a sheep-skin to prevent the rowers from slipping as they work ; and their feet are braced against a small slab of wood.

The passengers sit in the bottom of the boat, near the stern, and are so placed as to have the effect of slightly elevating the bow of the craft, and so causing it to swim more easily ; an object, for the attainment of which, it is not unusual even to *grease* the outside of the boat, that it may encounter less friction from the water. A more or less costly carpet covers the bottom of the caique ; seated upon which, it is necessary to maintain the most rigid immobility ; for the slightest sudden movement might capsize the fragile vessel, or at least cause the wrists of the rowers to come in contact. The caique is, in fact, as sensitive in the matter of counterpoise as a balance, and lurches fearfully to right or left, in punishment of the slightest departure from strict equilibrium. The impassiveness of the Turks, always motionless as statues, suits amazingly with this constraint, which is as singularly trying to the petulant restlessness of the Giaours ; who, although soon becoming habituated to the necessity of the case, generally imperil their lives some scores of times, by their indiscreet vivacity, before acquiring the proper self-control.

Four persons can sit in a two-oared caique. Despite the heat of the sun, these boats have no awning ; for that convenience would not only retard their progress, but be contrary to the Turkish etiquette, which restricts its use to the caiques of the Sultan only ; but it is usual to carry a parasol, merely taking care to lower it, on passing near any of the imperial residences. One of the caiques will easily keep pace with a horse, passing along the shore at a rapid trot ; and, indeed, often outstrip him.

Every caique bears near the bow a sort of plate or badge, indicating the landing at which it is stationed :—Top-Hané, Galata, Yeni-Djami, etc., etc.

The caidjis, or boatmen belonging to the caiques, from which they take their name, are mostly superb fellows,—Arnaouts or Armatolians,—of herculean build, and fine, manly proportions. The air and sun, in embrowning their skins, have given them the tint of handsome bronze statues,—the form of which they already possessed. Their dress consists of loose linen trousers or drawers, of pure white ; striped shirts, with sleeves looped-up to leave their arms unembarrassed ; a red fez, the blue or black tassel of which is more than six inches in length ; and a woollen sash, striped with yellow and red, which is wound repeatedly around the waist, giving support to the chest, and finely developing the bust.

They wear nothing of beard but the moustache, to avoid the heat which the superfluous hair would occasion. Their feet and legs are bare, and their shirts, open in front, expose a chest of great breadth and power ; while, at each stroke of the oar, the biceps muscles rise upon their brawny arms like balls of iron. The compulsory ablutions of their religion keep always in a state of thorough cleanliness these fine models of form, glowing with the robust health, consequent upon their open-air avocation and an invariable temperance unknown among the same classes in northern countries. These men, despite the severity of their labour, eat little else than bread, cucumbers, maize, and fruits, and drink nothing but water or coffee ; and those who are Mussulmans, pull from morning till night without even taking a drop of water, or a single puff of the pipe, during the whole thirty days of the fast of Ramadan.

It is certainly no exaggeration, to estimate at three or

four thousand, the number of caidjis who ply at the various landing-places of Constantinople, and from the Bosphorus to Therapia or Buyuk-Deré. The arrangement of the town, separated as it is from its suburbs by the Golden Horn, the Bosphorus, and the Sea of Marmora, necessitates perpetual communication by water. It is necessary, at each moment, to take a caique, to go from Top-Hané to Seraï-Bournou ; from Beschick-Tash to Scutari ; from Psammathia to Kadi-Keuï ; or even from one side to the other of the Golden Horn, if one chances to be a little too remote for convenience, from any of the bridges of boats which cross the harbour.

Nothing can be more amusing, than, on arriving at one of these landing, or rather embarking, places, to see the caidjis crowd around and dispute the possession of your person, as our old hackney-coachmen used to do in former times, assailing each other with an amazing volubility of abuse, while each overwhelms the desired passenger with praises of his own particular boat ; the tumult being often augmented by the participation of a stray dog or two, who complain loudly of having been disturbed or trampled upon by the boatmen, in their regardless haste. At length, pushed, hustled, elbowed, "chaffed," and bewildered, you remain the helpless prey of one or two gigantic fellows, who bear you in triumph towards their own caique, through grumbling groups of their disappointed brethren.

But although, when you have once fairly surrendered, you experience all the chivalrous courtesy with which gallant soldiers may be expected to treat "prisoners of war," your perils and difficulties are by no means past ; for to get *into* a caique without causing it to turn its keel uppermost, is an operation requiring great skill, care, and experience. Some one, however, volunteers to maintain

the boat in its perpendicular, while you effect your embarkation ; and for this complaisance you toss him a *para*, or something like half-a-farthing.

Nor is it always easy to disengage the caique from the large fleet of boats in which it lies, and which is to be found at every landing-place ; and it is only by the incomparable skill of the *caidjis*, that this feat is accomplished without collision or capsize.

To “land,” the caique turns so that its stern shall touch the shore ; and this evolution also requires great address, and would lead to frequent collisions, but for a certain code of “cries” which serve as signals, and by means of which the boatmen communicate their intentions to each other.

On landing, the passenger leaves the amount of his “fare” upon the carpet in the bottom of the caique, in *piastres* or *bechlicks*, according to what may have been the length of the passage, or the price agreed upon.

It is a pleasant vocation, that of a *caidji* at Constantinople ; and would continue to be a very lucrative one, but for the interference of steamers, which begin to ply upon the Bosphorus, like the small steamers upon the Thames, with frequent stoppages and low fares.

From the bridge of Galata—beyond which they cannot penetrate—a crowd of steamers starts at every hour in the day—Turkish, English, Austrian, or French—the smoke from which mingles with the silvery haze of the Golden Horn. They deposit their passengers by hundreds at Bebek, Arnaout-Keui, Anadoli-Hissar, Therapia, and Buyuk-Dere, upon the European shore ; or at Scutari, Kadi-Keui, or Princes’ Islands, on the Asiatic coast,—passages which it was formerly necessary to make in caiques, at great expense of both time and money, and not without incurring some danger from the force of the

currents, and from the wind, which is liable to burst in violent gusts, at any moment, from the mouth of the Black Sea.

The caidjis strive in vain to compete in speed with the steamers. Their muscles of flesh strain themselves hopelessly, against the iron muscles of the engine. There will soon remain for the caidjis only the short intermediate distances and crossings, and the patronage of the Turks of the "retrograde" party, who, still weeping over the annihilation of the Janissaries, employ caiques only, to transport them to their summer mansions, out of hatred to the diabolical intrusion and inventions of the Giaours.

There is also a sort of *caique-omnibus*; a heavy affair, laden with some thirty persons, and propelled by four or six oarsmen; who, at each stroke, rise, mount upon a wooden step, and throw themselves downward again with all their weight, to move the enormous oar that they wield; which automaton-like movement, repeated momentarily, produces a curious effect. The passengers by these boats are soldiers, hammals, Jews, old women, and poor devils in general, who employ this cheap but slow means of transport; which, however, the steamboats will soon banish, by the creation of third-class fares, for passengers of this description.

I have not, therefore, been at all surprised to hear of a riot among the caidjis; for it was an event easily to be predicted, on seeing the funnels of the innumerable steamers which smoked around the bridge of Galata, and whitened, beneath their paddles, the waters, which, until then, had been disturbed only by oars hollowed into crescents. Already, even during my sojourn, the boatmen crouched moodily upon their deserted stairs, regarding with saddened eye the steamers crowded with passengers, which glided swiftly past, and stemmed the rapid current

like gigantic fishes, and as if the water were their native element.

At length, comes the long waited-for termination of the Fast of Ramadan; which epoch is always celebrated by public rejoicings, as if it were a national calamity from which the people were just relieved, instead of the performance of an essential ceremonial of their religion!

The Bosphorus, the Golden Horn, and the Sea of Marmora, all present, therefore, an aspect the gayest and liveliest imaginable. All the ships in the harbour are decorated with streamers; flags of all nations float on the breeze. The swallow-tailed Turkish standard displays its three crescents of silver upon a shield of green, in a crimson field; France unrolls her simple tricolor; Austria flings wide her banner streaked with red and white, and charged with her escutcheon; Russia shows her cross of blue upon a field of silver; Great Britain her blended crosses of Saint George and Saint Andrew, and America her sky of azure sprinkled with stars; while around may be seen the blue cross of Greece, bearing in its centre the black and white chequer of Bavaria; the blood-red pennon of Morocco (of old time widely known and dreaded on the seas as the fearful ensign of avowed piracy); the green flag of Tripoli, sprinkled with half-moons, and the green, blue, and red stripes of Tunis: while the sun plays and sparkles brightly, upon all these banners, reflecting and multiplying them in the limpid waters beneath. Salvos, in every direction, salute the caique of the Sultan, which passes, resplendent with purple and gold, propelled by the vigorous arms of thirty caidjis; while the sailors, crowding the yards of all the ships, pour forth incessant thunders of cheering, and the alarmed albatrosses wheel

and circle, amid the heavy wreaths of smoke which begin to surround the vessels.

I take a caique at Top-Hané, and go from one ship to another, examining the form of the different vessels, and pause to give the preference to those of Trebisond, Moudania, Ismick, and Lampsaki. Their sterns rising like castles, their bows resembling the breasts of swans, and their masts with long lateen-yards, cannot differ much in model from the vessels which composed the Grecian fleet, at the time of the Trojan war; and it would not require much imagination to picture to one's self the fair-haired Achilles, seated upon one of these lofty poops bathed by the sea into which flows the Simoïs. The "American clippers," so much vaunted, are far from having this elegance of contour; speed and utility are qualities not worth speaking of.

In wandering about, my boat grazes that island of rocks whence rises the tower which the Franks have named (Heaven knows why!) "Leander's Tower," and which the Turks call *Kiss-Koulessi*, or "The Maiden's Tower." It is hardly necessary to say, that the tradition of Leander is very absurdly attached to this white tower, since it was the Hellespont, and *not* the Bosphorus, across which he swam to visit the fair Hero,—the lovely priestess of Venus. But the Turkish designation is explained by a very graceful legend.

The Sultan Mahmoud had a daughter of singular beauty, to whom a sorceress had predicted that she would die of the bite of a serpent. Her father, alarmed, and seeking to thwart this sinister prophecy, caused a kiosk to be built for his daughter, upon this island of rocks to which no reptile could find access. The son of the Schah of Persia, having heard the fame of the marvellous beauty of Mehar-Schegid (this was the name of the young girl),

became passionately enamoured of her, and contrived to convey to her one of those emblematical bouquets, by which the Orientals make their tender avowals in letters of flowers. Unhappily, among the clusters of hyacinths and roses an asp had nestled and lay concealed, which stung the finger of the Princess as she clasped the love-token. She was dying from the effects of the sting, in default of finding some one sufficiently devoted to suck the poison from the wound, when the young Prince, the author of all the evil, presented himself, drew the venom from the sting with his lips, and thus saved the life of Mehar-Schegid, whom the Sultan afterwards bestowed upon him as a wife.

The simple *truth*, however, is, that this tower, or one upon its site, built by Manuel Commenus, in the time of the Lower Empire, served to support one part of the immense chain of iron, which (attached also to two other points of the shores of Europe and Asia) barred the entrance of the Golden Horn to hostile vessels descending from the Black Sea.

If we go still further back, we shall find that Damalis, wife of Charis,—the general sent from Athens to succour the Byzantines, when attacked by Philip of Macedon,—died at Chrysopolis, and was buried upon this island, beneath a monument surmounted by the effigy of a heifer. A Greek inscription, which has been preserved, was carved upon the column of the tomb; and this, no doubt, is the true origin of the name of “*Kiss-Koulessi* ;” the “Tower,” or “Tomb,” of the “Maiden.” The epitaph runs thus:—

“I am not the image of the cow, daughter of Inachus, and I have not given my name to the Bosphorus, which extends before me. Her, the cruel resentment of Juno drove beyond the seas; but I who occupy this tomb, I am one of the dead—a daughter of Cecrops. I

was the wife of Charis, and I sailed with that hero, when he came to combat the ships of Philip. Until then, I had been called *Boïdion*, the young heifer ; now, the wife of Charis, I enjoy two continents."

This epitaph explains why a heifer was carved upon the funeral column of Damalis. It is known that, among the Greeks, the cow has furnished more than one complimentary subject of comparison ; and that Homer even gave to Juno the eyes of the ox. *Boïdion* is, therefore, a graceful surname, according to ancient notions ; and it is not strange to find it applied to a lovely young woman. But enough of the Greek ; let us return to the Turk.

It is the custom, at the termination of the fast, that the Queen-mother should make the Sultan a present of a young virgin, of the most surpassing loveliness ; and to find this phoenix, the slave merchants, or *djellabs*, ransack, for months in advance, both Circassia and Georgia ; and the price of the selected damsel mounts to a fabulous height.

This closing day of the fast, is consecrated to prayers, and visits to the mosques ; and in the evening there is a general illumination.

If the view of the harbour, with all the shipping decorated with flags and streamers, and its perpetual movement of vessels, was already a marvellous spectacle beneath the superb sun of the Orient, what must it not have been beneath the nocturnal illumination ! It is in attempting to delineate such scenes, that one discovers the impotence of both pen and pencil. Nothing less than a diorama, aided by its actual motion and rapid changes, could convey the slightest idea of the magical and gorgeous effects of light and shade, which this scene presented.

The Turks are particularly fond of burning powder on all occasions of rejoicing ; and the roar of cannon resounded continually in all directions ; the minarets of the

mosques shone like beacons ; verses of the Koran were traced, as on the former occasion, in letters of fire from tower to tower, and seemed as if inscribed in characters of light upon the dark blue of the evening sky. The compact crowd descended, in human cataracts, the streets of the hills of Pera and Galata ; around the fountain of Top-Hané shone, like glow worms, thousands of lights ; while the mosque of Sultan-Mahmoud rose proudly toward the sky, with its outlines marked by lines of flame, and its minarets flashing in the brilliant but fitful light.

A boat took myself and friend on board a ship of the Austrian Lloyds, where the kindness of an acquaintance had obtained a place for us. Top-Hané, illuminated with Bengal lights of green and red, blazed in the atmosphere of an apotheosis ; disturbed, however, at each moment, by the earthquake breath of artillery, the crackling of fireworks, fizzing of serpents, and bursting of bombs. The Mahmoudieh—mosque of Mahmoud—appeared of the colour of an opal ; or like those palaces of carbuncles, erected by the glowing fancy of Arabian story-tellers, for the habitation of the Queen of the Peris. It was blindingly magnificent !

The ships at anchor lined their masts, yards, and bulwarks with lamps of green, red, blue, and yellow ; and resembled castles or churches of jewels, floating upon an ocean of flame ; so dazzling were the waters of the Bosphorus, illumined by the reflection of this blaze of lamps, and this wilderness of coloured lights.

Seraï-Bournou seemed like a promontory of topaz, above which burst forth, encircled by bracelets of fire, the masts of silver formed by the minarets of Saint-Sophia, Sultan-Achmet, and the Osmanieh. Upon the coast of Asia, Scutari threw out myriads of brilliant rays ; and the two flaming shores of the Bosphorus, enclosed, as far as

the eye could reach, only one continuous stream of fire, which gave out innumerable clouds of sparks, whenever touched by the oars of the countless caiques, which flashed and glided in all directions.

Occasionally, some ship in the distance—not before perceived—was surrounded in a moment by a whole firmament of suns and stars, of blue and purple, which disappearing, she vanished again into the shadow, like a brilliant dream. The effect of these pyrotechnic surprises was charming.

The steamers, starred with coloured lamps, went and came, bearing bands of music, the clash of whose instruments, rose joyously upon the breeze, or died away in the distance, to be again renewed.

Above all this, the sky, as if it were also desirous of joining in the illumination, displayed prodigally its casket of stars, upon their field of lapis-lazuli, of the richest and deepest blue; of which the sublunar conflagration seemed hardly to redden even the verge.

I remained for an hour or two on board the Austrian vessel, intoxicating myself with this wonderful spectacle—sublime and unrivalled; and trying to imprint for ever upon my memory, the picture of these dazzling scenes of magic, reflected in the mirror of the Bosphorus.

What are our poor fêtes in the Place de la Concorde, where we burn some scores of lamps, beside this artificial fire of diamonds, emeralds, sapphires, and rubies, which stream and shine over a surface of ten or twelve miles in length, and instead of extinguishing themselves in the water, are only multiplied and rendered more brilliant by its reflection!

Here and there the brilliancy begins to fade; breaches are visible in the lines of fire; the powder explodes at longer intervals, and with some seeming difficulty; the

massive banks of smoke, which the wind can no longer drive away, roll and heave upon the water like enormous seals; the cold dew of the night begins to penetrate even the thickest garments, and one is forced to think of retiring; an operation, however, attended with both difficulty and peril. My caique awaited me at the ship's side. I hailed my caidji, and we departed.

There was upon the Bosphorus the most incredible swarm of boats of all kinds, and of more kinds and numbers than one can imagine or estimate; and, despite all the usual signals and precautions, the oars were constantly clashing, the boats' sides raking against each other; and at every instant, it was necessary for the caidji to trail the oars to prevent them from being torn from his hands, or his frail vessel upset.

The points of the bows of boats passed within two inches of my face, like levelled lances, or the beaks of birds of prey; the reflections of all the lights on the shore were shedding their last rays, blinding the caidjis, and deceiving them as to their true direction; when a boat at full speed came dashing forward, directly across our course, and must inevitably have gone over us,—in which case I should have been sent to the bottom, or cut in two,—if the boatmen had not, with extraordinary quickness and skill, backed their oars, and arrested their progress, with a strength and suddenness that seemed superhuman.

At length I arrived, safe and sound, at Top-Hané, through a tumult of boats and cries, at once deafening and maddening; and, amidst a crowd swarming around the landing, like ants in summer, I made my way to the Hotel de France in the Little Field of the Dead, through streets which began to be deserted; picking my way, with care, among the encampments of slumbering dogs;

and, wearied out with seeing, hearing, and enjoying, was speedily lost to everything, but the recurrence in dreams of vague impressions of the magnificent spectacle just witnessed, and certainly never to be forgotten.

During this time, the fortunate Caliph, in the depths of the seraglio, had raised the veil of the lovely slave presented to him by the Queen-mother;¹ and his eye had scanned those unsurpassed charms, which, henceforth, no eye of man save his own should ever behold. The flower had been plucked, and had bid farewell for ever to the air and the soil of nature, and the free light of heaven; and, although placed in a jewelled vase, was destined to fade and pine, in perpetual, though splendid, imprisonment.

¹ The "Queen-Mother," or "Sultana-Validé," are equivalent terms.—TRANS.

XVIII.

THE WALLS OF CONSTANTINOPLE.

I HAD formed a decided resolution to make a grand expedition among those remote districts of Constantinople, which are but rarely visited by travellers ; their curiosity seldom extending farther than the Bezestin, the Atmeidan, Sultan-Bajazet, the Old Seraglio, and the environs of Saint-Sophia ; around which localities is concentrated the life and movement of the Moslem City.

I started, accordingly, at an early hour, accompanied by a young Frenchman, who had been a long time resident in Turkey. We descended rapidly the slope of Galata ; crossed the Golden Horn, by the bridge of boats, on paying four paras to the toll-keeper ; and leaving Yeni-Djami at one side, we plunged boldly into a labyrinth of narrow streets and lanes, of the purest Turkish character.

As we advanced, the scene became more lonely ; the dogs, growing more savage at each stage of our progress, glared sullenly at us, and followed growling at our heels. The wooden houses, discoloured and dilapidated, with their crumbling lattices and floors out of line, presented much the appearance of decayed hen-coops. A fountain, in ruins, allowed its water to escape through various un-

regarded crevices, into a green and slimy basin. A dismantled *turbé* (funeral chapel), overrun with briars, nettles, and daffodils, displayed, through its cob-web covered gratings, some dingy sepulchral columns, leaning to right and left and offering to view only a few illegible inscriptions. A marabout reared its coarsely whitewashed dome, flanked with a minaret which resembled a tall candle surmounted by its extinguisher; above the long line of walls projected the sable cones of cypresses, and tufts of sycamore, or plane-tree, hung over into the streets.

No more mosques with columns of marble, and Moresque balconies; no more *konacks* of pashas glowing with brilliant colours, and sustaining their elegant aërial galleries; but, instead, great heaps of cinders, from amidst which rose black and grimy chimneys, formed of bricks placed on end. On every side, decay, dilapidation, and neglect; and above all this squalor and abandonment, the pure, dazzling, implacable sun-light of the Orient, making even more painfully obvious every minute detail of the wretchedness around.

Through lane after lane, crossing after crossing, we reached a large dilapidated khan, with lofty arches, and long stone walls, originally designed to accommodate caravans with trains of camels.

It was the hour of prayer; and from the exterior gallery of the minaret of the neighbouring mosque, two muezzins, clad in white, and moving around the gallery with the step of phantoms, proclaimed the sacramental formula of Islam to these mansions, deserted, blind and deaf, and losing themselves in silence and solitude. The verse of the Koran thus proclaimed, and which seemed almost as if it had been uttered from heaven (so devoid was the region of any movement of humanity), called forth no other response than a sort of sigh from some dog whose

dreams it disturbed, or the flapping of the wings of some pigeon alarmed by its suddenness.

The muezzins, however, did not the less continue their round, uttering the names of Allah and of the Prophet to the four winds of heaven, like sowers who are regardless where the seed falls which they scatter in their progress, well knowing that it will find root somewhere.

Perhaps, indeed, beneath even these worm-eaten roofs, and in the recesses of these seemingly abandoned ruins, there may be some of the faithful who spread their worn and faded carpets; and, turning themselves towards Mecca, repeat, with sincere devotion, "Allah is Allah, and Mahomet is his Prophet."

A negro on horseback passes occasionally; an old female mummy, stuck against a wall, protrudes from amid a mass of rags her monkey-like paw, and profits by the unexpected occasion to demand alms; two or three young imps (who seemed to have escaped bodily from one of Decamp's marvellous sketches), seek to amuse themselves by throwing pebbles into the basin of the exhausted fountain; a few lizards crawl fearlessly about over the stones; and this is all.

I felt myself, in my own despite, oppressed by an overwhelming sadness; and I should even have forgotten the proposed object of our ramble (which was to see the mountebanks near the gate of Silivri-Kapoussi), if my companion had not repeatedly reminded me of it.

I was fatigued, and perishing with thirst; for, without thinking of it, we had traversed an enormous space, and diverged very considerably from our road, which we recovered, not without difficulty. We traversed the court and garden of a mosque, the name of which I forget; and our ears were saluted with the sound of some barbarous and discordant music, issuing from an enclosure or booth

of planks, which indicated to us that we were on the right track at last.

There it was, indeed. We seated ourselves upon one of those low ottomans or footstools (about four inches in height), which abound in these places; called for coffee and pipes, and gave our best attention to the performance, which, in the middle of the area, around which we were seated, was taking place upon a heap of fine dust. This exhibition was that of Moors, performing nearly the same feats, as have been so often executed in France and England, by the Arabian troop of gymnasts or acrobats.

Indeed, I even fancied that I could recognise the big fellow, who served as the base of the human pyramid, and carried eight men piled upon his bronzed shoulders.

Some wooden-horses, supporting tight-ropes, showed that the exhibition had been augmented by rope-dancing; but we arrived too late to witness that part of the performance; a fact which I regretted exceedingly, because the performers were little girls of eight or ten years old, and (we were told) very pretty and singularly agile. There were also some comic rope-dancers; Turks with large beards, and great parrot-noses, who assumed, with the utmost gravity, the most grotesque attitudes.

At the extremity of the area was a latticed gallery, a *seraïl*, as they say in Turkey, serving as a private box, or tribune, for the females; and we were made to retire, that they might depart unmolested,—the presence of Giaours outraging their modesty; a modesty somewhat exaggerated, I must say, for we saw them pass at a distance, muffled up to the eyes, and looking like nothing on earth so much, as those wicker-work frames on which they hang the linen in the baths.

We now sought for something to eat; for if we had refreshed our eyes, our stomachs were none the better for

it, and every instant aggravated our sufferings. But in this unheard-of quarter, there were none of those delicacies to which we had accustomed ourselves; no kabobs sprinkled with pepper; no balls of rice wrapped in vine-leaves; or exquisite salads of cucumber, floating in oil, amid delicate morsels of meat. We found nothing to buy but white mulberries and black soap—a rather mediocre feast.

We hurried on famishing, casting our hungry eyes in all directions, and observing the streets which, being at least less deserted than the rest, seemed to offer some promise of sustenance. At length, a benevolent old Greek lady, who was followed by a small servant carrying a large parcel, took pity upon us, and pointed out, at no great distance, a sort of restaurant, in which we could probably appease our hunger. Her information proved to be most accurate; only the restaurant had been closed for several years! The recollections of the good old lady dated back to the days of her own youth!

The quarter through which we now passed, presented an entirely new aspect. It had no longer a Turkish air. The half-open doors of the houses, allowed the eye to penetrate the interior. At unlatticed windows, appeared charming female heads, decked with little caps of gauze, and surmounted by large braids of hair, forming a sort of crown. Young girls seated on the thresholds, gazed fearlessly into the street; and we could, without alarming them, admire their pure and delicate features, their fair tresses, and large blue eyes. Before the cafés, men in white tunics, red caps, and jackets with loose hanging sleeves, were swallowing large glasses of *raki*, and making themselves drunk like good Christians.

In short, we were in Psammathia; a quarter inhabited by the rayahs, the non-Mussulman subjects of the

Porte ; a sort of Greek colony in the midst of the Turkish town.

Animation had succeeded to silence ; merriment to sadness. We found ourselves, once more, amid a race of living beings ; and we unconsciously felt the unspeakable advantages of Christianity, even of the lowest order, over Heathenism, in a social point of view.

A young vagabond, seeing us in search of a tavern, offered himself as our guide, after making us look at his passport, like a young scamp, as he was ; and conducted us in a most round-about manner, in order to enhance the importance of the service, to a sort of restaurant, situated about twenty steps from where he started with us. We gave him a few paras for his trouble ; but, thinking himself, no doubt, inadequately rewarded, he possessed himself, with all the skill of a patriarch of pick-pockets, of the *porte-monnaie* of my companion, which contained some five and twenty shillings in bechlicks and piastres !

We entered a large room, where, behind a counter charged with dishes and bottles, stood a truculent-looking brigand, seemingly far more fitted to cut the throats of travellers than of chickens. This ferocious, blue-bearded personage, condescended, however, to serve us with some prawns, and some mullets broiled in paper ; followed by peaches, raisins, cheese, and a flask of white *resinato* wine. He was unable, on that day, despite our wish, to supply us with any meat ; for it was, I know not what feast of the Greek church, and fasting from flesh was obligatory.

But we were so desperately hungry, that this simple collation seemed to us a Belshazzar's feast ; and we were almost looking to see the fiery inscription blazing upon the wall. Meantime, however, Psammathia stood firm upon its foundations, and we achieved our repast without any Biblical catastrophe.

Duly refreshed, we put ourselves again under way with renewed vigour, and soon reached the gate which is nearest to the Castle of the Seven Towers; in Greek *Heptapurgon*, in Turkish *Jedi-Kouleler*; names which have, all three, the same signification. Here we encountered one of those men with horses for hire, who so abound at Top-Hané, near the Green Kiosk, or by the great cemetery of Pera, and in other frequented quarters of Constantinople, but of miraculous rarity in such a place as this. We speedily bestrode his two beasts, who were very nicely caparisoned, and as good, certainly, as those pretended English jades, with which our triumphant countrymen parade the Champs Elysées at Paris.

These worthy beasts of Kurdistan, the one white, the other black, set out side-by-side in brotherly style, at a long swinging pace, followed by their master on foot; and we, turning to the right, left upon the other hand the dilapidated towers of the renowned old prison of the state; the prison to which, as tradition records, the Porte was wont to commit the foreign ambassadors, at the moment of declaring war against the countries which they represented; not thinking it worth while to stand upon ceremony with mere Christian dogs. But times have changed slightly, and the Turk has learned to look with different eyes upon the European Powers, since the time when the Castle of the Seven Towers obtained its fearful and gloomy reputation.

We would have gone along the whole outer extent of these ancient walls of Byzantium, from the sea to Ederne-Kapoussi, and even farther, had we not been far too much fatigued.

I do not suppose, that there is in the world a ride more austere-melancholy, than upon this road, which extends for nearly a league, between a cemetery and a mass of ruins.

The ramparts, composed of two lines of wall flanked with square towers, have at their base a large moat, at present cultivated throughout, which is again surrounded by a stone parapet ; forming, in fact, three lines of fortification.

These are the walls of Constantine ; at least such as have been left of them, after time, sieges, and earthquakes have done their worst upon them. In their masses of brick and stone, are still visible breaches made by catapults and battering-rams, or by that gigantic culverin, that mastodon of artillery, which was served by seven hundred cannoniers, and threw balls of marble, of nearly half a ton in weight.

Here and there, a gigantic crevice severed a tower from top to bottom ; farther on, a mass of wall had fallen into the moat ; but where masonry was wanting, the elements had supplied earth and seed ; a shrub had supplied the place of a missing battlement, and grown into a tree ; the thousand tendrils of parasitical plants sustained the stone which would otherwise have fallen ; the roots of trees, after acting as wedges to introduce themselves between the joints of the stones, became chains to confine them ; and the line of wall was still (to the eye) continued without interruption ; raising against the clear sky its battered profile, and displaying its curtains and bastions, draped with ivy, and gilded by time, with tints by turns mellow and severe. At intervals were visible the ancient gates, of Byzantine architecture, overlaid with Turkish masonry, but still leaving enough of the original to be recognised.

It was difficult to realise, that a living city lay behind the defunct ramparts which hid Constantinople from our view. It had been easier to believe one's self near some of those cities of the Arabian legends, all the inhabitants

of which had been, by some magical process, turned into stone. Only a few minarets, rearing their heads above the immense circuit of ruins, testified that there was life within, and that the Capital of Islam still existed.

The conqueror of Constantine XIII., if he could return to the world, could make again, with striking appropriateness, his celebrated quotation from the Persian :

“The spider shall weave her web in the palace of Emperors, and the owl cry by night from the towers of Ephrasiab.”

These embrowned walls, encumbered by the vegetation peculiar to ruins, which seemed to expand itself lazily in the solitude, and over which crept fearlessly an occasional lizard, witnessed, four hundred years ago, thronging around their base, the hordes of Asia, urged on by the terrible Mahomet II. The bodies of Janissaries and of savages rolled, covered with wounds, in this moat, where now peaceful vegetation displays itself; streams of blood poured down, where now droop only the tendrils of ivy or of sassafras.

One of the most fearful of human struggles—the conflict of race against race, of religion against religion—occurred on this spot, now deserted, and where now reigns the silence of decay and death. As is always the case, the young and vigorous barbarism overpowered the old and decrepid civilisation; and while the Greek priest still continued tranquilly to fry his fish, unable to believe in the possibility that Constantinople could be taken, the triumphant Mahomet II. spurred his steed into the sacred precincts of Saint-Sophia, and struck his ensanguined hand upon the marble wall of the sanctuary, in token of conquest. The Cross fell before the Crescent; and the corpse of the Emperor Constantine was withdrawn from a heap of nameless dead, bleeding, mutilated, and distin-

guishable only by the golden eagles, which served as clasps to his buskins of imperial purple.

I spoke just now of the priest, occupied in frying his fish, during the heat of the terrific and final assault upon Constantinople, and who replied, incredulously, to the announcement of the success of the Turks, "Pooh! I would sooner believe that these fish will come to life again, jump out of the boiling oil, and swim upon the floor!" This prodigy, however, is said to have actually occurred, and, of course brought conviction to the mind of the obstinate monk; and it certainly was followed—or preceded—by the parallel prodigy of the triumph of the Moslems.

The miraculous escape of the fish was made into the cistern of the ruined Greek church of Baloukli, which is visible at some distance from the ramparts, a little before arriving at Silivri-Kapoussi. The fish themselves are red upon one side, but brown on the other, in memory of their experience of the frying-pan, in which they were half-cooked; and a poor devil of a monk still exhibits them to strangers!

Although I do not profess opinions of the Voltaire school on the subject of miracles, I did not think it necessary to go to the convent, to verify or refute this one for myself; especially as it was a non-Catholic miracle, which I was by no means called upon to believe. I contented myself, therefore, with taking the legend upon trust; and continued my progress.

The rains of winter, the winds of summer, and the work of time, have heaped the dust upon the road which we were pursuing, and which has, probably, not been repaired since the days of Constantine, and have so utterly destroyed its distinctive character, that in places it seemed more like the summit of some vast, half-buried rampart, than a practicable roadway; but, nevertheless, two arabas were taking their course along it,—one, gilded and painted,

filled with richly-dressed and closely-veiled females, carrying beautiful children upon their knees ; the other, formed of coarse planks attached by a rough frame-work of wood, and crowded with a troop of *Zigari*, male and female, brown as Indians, wild, and half-clad ; who roared out some rude Bohemian ballad, accompanied by the deep tones and melodious clang of tambourines.

I have yet to understand how these clumsy vehicles—alike clumsy, despite the difference of decoration—escaped being a hundred times precipitated, in fragments, to the bottom of the trenches on either side ; but the oxen were sure-footed, and the drivers never left hold of their horns. As to myself, I quitted this rugged pathway of stones, and walked my horse beneath the cypresses of the immense old cemetery, which stretches from the Seven Towers to the foot of the hills of Eyoub.

I was riding slowly along a narrow path, traced among the graves, when I observed, resting beside a tomb, a young female, veiled with a rather transparent yachmack, and enwrapped in a feredgé of pale green. She held in her hand a bunch of roses, and the fixed gaze of her large and luminous eyes, seemed to indicate that she was lost in profound reverie. Did she bring these flowers as a tribute to the grave of some beloved one ; or was she simply idling among these gloomy shades ? That is a question which I cannot answer ; but, at the sound of the hoofs of my horse, she raised her head, and, through the transparent muslin of her veil, displayed a face of surpassing loveliness. Doubtless, my eyes expressed, frankly, the admiration which her beauty excited ; for she approached the verge of the pathway, and, with a movement full of timid grace, offered me a rose, drawn from her bouquet.

My companion, who followed, now overtook me ; and

she offered him a rose, also, with an instinct of delicacy, which seemed designed to correct aught that might have been too free, in her first impulse.

I saluted her, with my best grace, in the oriental manner; two or three companions rejoined her, and she disappeared beneath the shadow of the overhanging cypresses.

Thus terminated the only "conquest," I can boast among the Turkish fair ones. But I have never forgotten those luminous black eyes, with their rich, drooping lashes; and I still preserve, with care, the rose she gave me, and which I shall ever guard as a precious relic.

XIX.

JEWISH QUARTER.—GREEK QUARTER.—TURKISH BATH.

WERE I making an antiquarian tour, instead of the journey of an artist, or mere traveller, I should have been able to indulge, here, in a long dissertation upon the probable sites of the edifices of ancient Byzantium ; to reconstruct them, from the few dubious fragments lost amid the aggregation of Turkish hovels and ruins ; and lend authenticity to my creations or assumptions, by transcribing and importing bodily into the subject, a certain number of Greek inscriptions, which would, at least, have given me an air of great learning and antiquarian wisdom. But I prefer a rough sketch made from nature—a real impression honestly rendered.

I shall not, therefore, enter upon a detailed account of every ancient gate, nor seek to define the precise spot, on which fell the unfortunate Constantine Dracosis ; a spot marked, nevertheless,—so they say,—by a gigantic tree planted on the ramparts. These gates open through, or beneath, massive towers ; and are also ornamented by columns of a composite order, indicating the decadence of the Byzantine architecture, and the shafts of which are often borrowed from some ancient temple.

The “Golden-Gate,” is the designation of an archway, completely filled-in with solid masonry ; but, according to an old tradition, the future conquerors of Constan-

tinople, will penetrate into the city by this gate, through which, aforetime, passed in triumph Alexis Strategopolos (lieutenant of Michael Paleologus), when he, in one night, reconquered Byzantium from Beaudoin II., and put an end to the French Empire in the East.

Is it true, as the Greeks hope and expect, that this gate will soon open again its massive portals, to admit their co-religionists the Russians, after the interval of four hundred years (fixed by a prophecy as the time which should intervene from the last capture of Constantinople) shall have elapsed,—*a period which will expire on the 29th of May next*; and will mass, on that day, be celebrated in Saint-Sophia, in presence of the Czar?

This is a question—being of the future—whose depths I will not seek to explore; but recent events render it by no means surprising, that the imaginations of both Greeks and Turks should be strongly excited, in reference to a prophecy so long, and so well known, and the fulfilment of which at one moment seemed far from impossible, if it could be then deemed even improbable.

The interference of the combined forces of Great Britain and France, seems now, however, to militate strongly against the literal fulfilment of the prediction; but it may, perhaps, prove that through the “golden gate” of friendly alliance and advanced civilisation, the resident Christians may enter Constantinople as the equals of the Turks, and by such peaceful conquest over prejudice and intolerance, offer a fulfilment of the prophecy, in a better and loftier sense than even a literal one; and one certainly scarcely less remarkable, or, but a short time since, less probable, than would have been the actual military entry of the Russians, as victors and conquerors.

Near the Adrianople gate we dismounted from our horses, to take a cup of coffee and smoke a chibouque, in

a café which we found crowded with a motley population; and this done, we pursued our way, still followed or accompanied by the cemetery—the Field of the Dead,—the extent of which seemed almost as eternal as the repose of its inhabitants. At length, however, we did find the end of the wall of the cemetery, and were able to re-enter the town, by guiding our steeds with great care among the broken and decaying tombs, and over the slippery fragments of marble with which the earth was thickly strewn.

In this way we arrived at a quarter of a strange and peculiar aspect. The houses became more and more dilapidated, poor, and dingy. Their fronts—haggard, riven, and projecting in all directions—seemed ready to fall, not only in ruins, but in a state of putrefaction. The roofs seemed afflicted with scurvy, and the walls to reek with leprosy. A few mangy dogs, reduced to the condition of skeletons and swarming with vermin, lay sleeping in the black and fetid mire. Some wretched rags hung at the windows, behind which, aroused by the tramp of our horses, we discovered strange and grotesque heads, covered with enormous turbans, or rather pads of white linen; haggard and sickly countenances, whose yellow skin and lifeless black eyes, reminded one of nothing so much as of omelettes, into each of which two coals had fallen. Some phantoms passed furtively along, among the houses, their foreheads bound with a rag of white spotted with black,—as if a usurer had wiped his pen there all the day,—and their forms enveloped in ragged garments, varnished with dirt.

We were at *Balata*; the Jewish-quarter—the *Ghetto* of Constantinople; and we saw there the squalid residue of four hundred years of oppression and exaction—the filth, beneath which these people, everywhere proscribed, sought,

like certain insects, to escape from their persecutors. They endeavour to save themselves from pursuit, by the disgust which they inspire ; they live in the mire, and acquire its colour. It were almost impossible, to imagine anything more impure, or more thoroughly infected. Scurvy, scrofula, leprosy, and all the other Biblical impurities and diseases, of which they have never been cleansed or cured since the days of Moses, devour them, without a seeming effort on their part to oppose their ravages. Money and gain seem their sole idea ; they do not shrink from even the plague, if they can make some small profit upon the garments of the dead.

In this hideous region, roll, pell-mell, Aaron and Isaac, Abraham and Jacob—those grand old Scriptural names, with their historic associations, reduced to such companionship ; and these unfortunates, of whom some are clandestinely millionaires,—their wealth their greatest danger and curse,—live chiefly upon the heads of fish, which are cut off as poisonous ; and which induce, among the Jews, certain dreadful disorders. This filthy diet has, for them, the paramount advantage of costing almost nothing ; for oppression has degraded them, until the possession of money which they dare not use, and for mere possession of which they are persecuted, is their sole and absorbing object in life.

On the opposite side of the Golden-Horn, upon a barren declivity, extends the cemetery which absorbs their sickly race. The sun burns the formless stones which compose their tombs, where not a blade of grass grows, nor a single tree casts its shade. The Turks would not allow that luxury to the proscribed race ; but chose that their place of burial should retain the aspect of a place ignominious and accursed. It is scarcely permitted to them, to carve a few Hebrew characters upon the rude

blocks of stone, which sprinkle with their rough masses this desolate and miserable field of mortality.

What a difference between these sickly and suffering caricatures of humanity, these women, whose age, and even sex, it is difficult to conjecture, and the superb Jewesses of the time of Constantine, beautiful as the Queen of Sheba, and clad like her in their dalmatiques of silk and purple; their girdles and chains of gold, and embroidered and jewelled tiaras! It is, nevertheless, the same race, although one can hardly give the fact credence. The one could offer models for the Madonnas of Raphael; Rembrandt alone would be capable of making the others figure in some scene of squalor, or of infernal magic.

The same abasement of race is discernible among the men as the women. Not one has that purity of type common to the Jews of Africa, who seem to have preserved their original oriental stamp, in its highest perfection.

The Turks, who recognise *Aïssa* (Jesus) as a prophet, have demanded from the Jews a fearful retribution for his death. It is proper to add, however, that at present, they are not maltreated as in former times; and their lives and fortunes are tolerably safe against persecution and extortion. But they do not yet feel sufficient assurance of safety, themselves, to abandon the filth and misery, which have, heretofore, been their only protection. They are still repulsive, sordid, and low; hiding their gold amid rags. They, in turn, take their vengeance upon Christian, Greek, and Turk, in the way of usury.

In the recesses of these infected hovels, more than one Shylock, awaiting the maturity of his bond, sharpens his knife upon the leather of his shoe; more than one cabalistic rabbi, casts ashes upon his head, and works his incantations, to obtain from Heaven the chastisement of

nations, who have been already, for centuries, swept from the face of the earth.

We issued, at length, from this wretched locality, and made our way into Phanaris—the quarter inhabited by the better classes of Greeks; a sort of “West End,” in proximity to an “Alsatia,” or a “*Cour des Miracles*.” It consists of houses of stone, of considerable architectural pretension; many of which have balconies sustained by brackets cut into steps, or ornamented with sculpture. Others, more ancient, recall the narrow fronts of the small French mansions of the middle ages—half-fortresses and half-dwellings. The walls are thick enough to sustain a siege; the iron shutters are bullet-proof; enormous gratings defend the windows, and the cornices seem to transform themselves unconsciously into battlements; a harmless luxury of fortification, which is at present serviceable only against fire, whose forked tongues would lash themselves in vain against these piles of masonry.

This quarter is, in fact, what remains of the ancient Byzantium. Here live, in obscurity, the descendants of Comnenus, Ducas, and Paleologus; princes without principalities, but whose ancestors have worn the purple, and in whose veins flows the blood of emperors. Their own servants treat them as kings, and they console themselves with the reverence which they receive from their own race. Considerable wealth is contained in many of these mansions, which, although richly ornamented within, are very plain externally; oriental luxury habitually shrinking from any display which may attract the envy or cupidity of those in power. The Phanariotes have long been celebrated for their diplomatic talent, and they formerly directed all the international affairs of the Porte; but they seem to have lost ground very much, since the Greek revolution.

On issuing again from Phanaris, we enter the streets which coast the Golden-Horn, and in which swarms an active commercial population. At every step, one encounters hammals in couples, carrying immense weights suspended between them from a pole; asses, harnessed between two long planks of which each supports an end, obstruct the thoroughfares, and mow down all who do not rapidly get out of their way, whenever they turn a corner. In fact, these poor beasts sometimes remain fixed against the walls of a narrow street, without being able either to advance or retreat; an occurrence which, by checking the circulation, speedily produces an agglomeration of horsemen, foot-passengers, porters, women, children, and dogs; who grumble, swear, shout, and bark in all varieties of tone, until the ass-driver succeeds in pulling his beast out of the dilemma by the tail, and so opens again the thoroughfare. The accumulated crowd begins to flow on again in its destined channels, and tranquillity is re-established; not, however, without a previous liberal distribution of thumps and thwacks, of which the donkeys, as the innocent and unwilling cause of the difficulty, engross, very properly and equitably, the greater portion.

The ground rises, in the form of an amphitheatre, from the sea to the ramparts of which we had just made the circuit; and above the medley of roofs of the Turkish houses, the eye could discern, here and there, some fragment of the embattled wall, or some arch of the ancient aqueduct, which enclose the wretched modern constructions, that seem deliberately prepared to encourage fires, and which a single match would set in flames.

How large a portion of Constantinople has already crumbled into ashes, at their base, in sight of these dark and antique masses of stone! A veritable Turkish house

of one hundred years old, is a veritable rarity in Stamboul.

Our "master of the horse," walking with his hand upon the croupe of my steed, led my friend and myself through the crowd and the labyrinth; and we soon reached the second bridge across the Golden-Horn; following which, we traversed "Kassim-Pasha" and the acclivity of the Little Field, and were deposited at the door of the Hotel de France; our guide not appearing to have suffered the least fatigue from this enormous round.

As for me, I threw myself upon a divan near the window, and abandoned myself to the luxury of the *kief*, somewhat overcome by fatigue and by the narcotised tobacco with which I had charged my pipe; and in the evening, after an early supper, I felt little temptation to pursue my custom of walking in front of the cafés of the Little Field.

The next day, finding myself slightly rheumatic, I determined to take a bath in the Turkish fashion (which is declared to be a wonderfully refreshing process); and with this view, I directed my steps towards "the baths of Mahmoud," situated near the Bazaar, and admitted to be the largest and most luxurious in Constantinople.

The traditions of the ancient *Thermæ*, lost to us, are preserved in the East. Christianity, in teaching the disregard of material things, has allowed to fall into gradual desuetude, the inculcation of care for our perishable bodies as a duty; regarding such a sentiment as savouring somewhat of paganism.

Indeed, some Spanish monk or other, some time after the conquest of Granada, actually preached against the use of the Moorish baths; and declared those who used them, obnoxious to the charge of sensualism and heresy.

But in the Orient, where cleanliness of person is among

the first obligations of religion, the baths have preserved all the luxury of both the Grecian and the Roman periods ; and are superb edifices, of the loftiest architectural pretension, with cupolas, domes and columns, enriched with marble and alabaster, and displaying great varieties of colour and design ; while they are thronged with armies of attendants, whose various offices recall the ancient time already named, and carry us back, in imagination, to Rome and Byzantium.

A large hall, opening upon the street,—the doorway of which is closed only by a piece of tapestry,—receives the visitor on his entrance. Near this doorway, the master of the bath is seated, having on one side the “till,” into which he drops the money received as the price of the bath, and on the other, a sort of chest, in which he deposits the watches, money, and other articles of value left with him by the bathers on their entrance.

Around this hall, at a temperature nearly the same as exists externally, run two raised galleries, supplied with camp-beds ; in its centre gushes a fountain, whose spray floats in the air, or sparkles upon the marble floor.

Around this fountain are ranged pots of basil, mint, and other odoriferous plants, of which the Turks are so peculiarly fond.

Cloths of white, blue, or parti-colour hang upon cords, or are pendant from the ceiling, recalling the flags and banners in the arches of Westminster or the *Invalides*.

In the beds, smoking, sipping coffee, drinking sherbet, or sleeping wrapped to the chin, the bathers—*i. e.*, those who *have* bathed—await the moment when perspiration shall have ceased sufficiently to permit them to dress.

I was made to ascend to the second gallery, by a little wooden staircase, and a bed pointed out to me ; and so

soon as I was disencumbered of my clothing, two *tellaks* twisted a white napkin around my head, in the form of a turban, and enwrapped me, from the waist to the ankle, in a piece of calico, like the drapery of the Egyptian statues. At foot of the stairs, I found a pair of gigantic wooden shoes, into which I stuck my feet; and, thus equipped and mounted, I was half led and half supported by the tellaks, into the second apartment, where a somewhat more elevated temperature is maintained. Here I was left for a short time to habituate myself to the atmosphere, and be prepared in some degree for the heat of the third chamber, in which the temperature is raised to 125° or 130° of Fahrenheit.

These baths differ very much from our “vapour-baths.” A fire burns continually beneath their slabs of marble, and the water, which is spread above them, is volatilised in clouds of white steam, instead of issuing from a boiler in jets. They are in a manner air-baths, and the extreme heat induces the most profuse perspiration.

Under a sort of cupola, lighted by large panes of a greenish glass, and admitting but a vague and doubtful light, were disposed some seven or eight marble slabs,—resembling tombs in form,—to receive the persons of the bathers; who, extended like corpses on a dissecting-table, submit to the first process of a Turkish bath, which consists in being lightly pinched, and not so lightly rubbed and kneaded, until their persons are covered with a dew of perspiration, like that which forms outside a bottle of champagne when placed in ice.

When the pores are thus opened, and the whole frame streaming with perspiration, the bather is raised by the attendants, made to assume again his wooden shoes,—without which the feet would be blistered by contact with the heated floor,—and conducted into one of the niches,

which abound in the wall of the rotunda that forms the bathing-room.

A fountain of white marble, from which are drawn, at pleasure, jets of either hot or cold water, occupies each of these niches. The tellak makes the bather sit near the basin, arms his hand with a gauntlet of camel-skin, and begins to "curry," first the arms, then the legs, and afterwards the body, with a merciless severity, which almost draws blood, but inflicts no actual excoriation or injury.

Then, from the fountain, he dashes over his patient several basins of warm water; and having allowed this to partially dry, seizes him again and "polishes him off" with the naked hand; causing long gray rolls to peel from the skin, in a manner astounding to a European convinced of the cleanliness of his own person.

This process is followed by a new deluge, and then by a fresh scrubbing with tufts of hemp streaming with soap-suds. Then the tellak separates the hair, and scrubs the skin of the head; and then follows a cataract of fresh water, to prevent any determination of blood to the head, in consequence of the heat and the friction.

My tellak was a young Macedonian,—perhaps, of fifteen or sixteen years of age,—whose skin, softened by constant immersion, had acquired a brownish tint, and a fineness of polish almost inconceivable. He had no flesh left, nothing but muscles; but no lack of strength, for all that.

These various ceremonies terminated, I was enwrapped in dry linen, and conducted to my bed, where two youths "kneaded" me once more. I lay there for about an hour, in a drowsy reverie, taking coffee and iced lemonade; and when I at length rose and went forth, I felt so light, so supple, so relieved from all sense of fatigue, that I appeared to be walking on air.

XX.

THE BAIRAM.

THE Ramadan was finished ; and, without detracting in the least from the zeal of the Mussulmans, it may be acknowledged that the termination of the fast is always received with general satisfaction ; because, despite the nocturnal carvinal which is blended with the daily fast, it is excessively severe.

At this epoch every Turk renews his wardrobe ; and nothing can be prettier than to see the streets sparkling with new clothing of gay and bright colours, ornamented with embroidery which displays all its first freshness, instead of the accustomed gathering of rags, which, however picturesque, are more pleasing in a picture of Decamps than in reality.

Now, therefore, every Mussulman puts on all that he has of richest and gayest aspect ; blue, pink, green, and scarlet, shine in all directions ; the muslin of the turbans is clean, the babouches unsoiled by dust or wear ; and, in fact, the metropolis of Islam has put on its holiday garments from head to foot.

If a traveller just arrived by steamer, were to land to-day, and depart again to-morrow, he would take with him an idea of Constantinople strangely different from that which a more lengthened sojourn would give. The city of the Sultans would appear to him much more Turkish than it really is.

The streets are thronged with musicians, bearing fifes and drums, who had given serenades, during the Ramadan, to the more considerable inhabitants. When their *charivari* has lasted long enough to attract the attention of the inmates of a house, a lattice opens, and a hand appears, which throws a shawl, a piece of stuff, a sash, or some analogous article, which is quickly placed in a basket laden with gifts of the same description. This is the *bachish*, given as the reward of the previous efforts of the musicians, who are generally novices from the tekkés of the dervishes. This sort of service is paid by the Turks "in the lump," in preference to giving, on each occasion, a para, or a halfpenny.

The *Baïram* is a ceremony similar in kind to the hand-kissing in Spain; and all the great dignitaries of the empire come to pay their homage to the Padischa (Sultan). Turkish magnificence is then seen in all its splendour; and it is one of the most favourable occasions that can be seized, by a stranger, to study and admire the luxury, ordinarily concealed behind the mysterious walls of the seraglio. Only it is not easy to witness this ceremony, except by being fictitiously included, for the moment, among the members of some friendly embassy.

The Sardinian Legation kindly consented to show me this favour; and at three o'clock in the morning, one of the minister's *cawas* knocked at my door with the hilt of his sabre. I was already up, dressed, and ready to follow him. I descended in all haste, and we began to thread the mountainous streets of Pera; arousing hordes of sleeping dogs,—regardless of the proverb,—who raised their noses at the sound of our footsteps, and essayed a feeble bark, as an acquittance to their consciences; and encountering long files of camels, whose loaded flanks grazed the walls of the houses, and hardly left us room to pass.

A gleam of rose-coloured light began already to tinge the summits of these houses, although their base was still wrapped in deep shadow. It was very charming to see the dawn playing upon these roofs, and brightening the spires of the neighbouring minarets, with a freshness of hue which I have seen in no other clime. One seems to realise, that he is but two steps from the land where the sun rises. The sky of Constantinople has not that intense blue, characteristic of southern countries, but resembles more that of Venice, with, however, greater transparency and more of light and vapour. The sun, as it rises, seems to throw aside curtains of pink muslin and silvery gauze; and it is not until a more advanced hour, that the atmosphere is bathed in some tints of azure. It is easy to understand, in walking at this early hour in Constantinople, the force of the epithet *rododactulos*, which Homer applies, so invariably, to the dawn.

We had to call for some other persons on our way; but—rare occurrence—we found every one ready; and, our little band being completed, we descended to the landing-place of Top-Hané, where the caique of the legation awaited us.

Despite the early hour, the Golden-Horn, and the large basin which expands at its entrance, presented a most animated scene. All the vessels were decorated with many-coloured flags and streamers, from boom to truck. A vast number of gilded boats, decorated with superb carpets or tapestries, and manned by vigorous oarsmen, flew across the rose-tinted water; and these boats, laden with pashas, viziers, beys, and other dignitaries, coming from their palaces on the banks of the Bosphorus, were all directing their course towards Seraï-Bournou.

The albatrosses and gulls, somewhat amazed at this

unseasonable tumult, flew about, and hovered, screaming, over the boats; or seemed seeking to chase away, with their wings, the few scattered flakes of morning mist, which still lay upon the surface of the water, like fragments of swans'-down.

A vast number of boats were crowded about the landing-place of the Green Kiosk, in front of the seraglio quay; and it was with great difficulty that we reached the shore, which was, in turn, crowded with *sais*, holding superb horses by the bridle and awaiting their masters.

As we were somewhat too early, we went into the Green Kiosk, to take pipes and coffee. This kiosk is a charming pavilion, in the ancient Turkish style, but now shorn of its original splendour, and serving only for a guard-chamber and waiting-room. It is covered externally with draperies and awnings, of the colour which its name indicates; while, internally, the remains of sculpture, enamel, painting and gilding, evince the more dignified uses of its primitive destination.

On this occasion, it presented a curious gathering of diverse "types,"—European, Asiatic, and Turkish; of richly-dressed cawas of the various embassies, and soldiers in the uniform of the Nizam, whose bronzed complexions alone declared them Mussulmans.

At length, the gates of the seraglio were thrown open, and we passed through a court lined with cypresses, sycamores, and plane-trees, of enormous size; bordered with kiosks of Chinese design, and buildings with battlemented walls and demi-turrets, resembling somewhat the English feudal architecture,—a *mélange*, in fact, of garden, palace, and fortress; until we reached an inner court, at the angle of which rises the ancient church of Saint Irene, now transformed into an arsenal; and where is also a small building, pierced with numerous windows, and

devoted to the use of the foreign embassies ; from which can be seen all that passes.

The ceremony commenced with a religious act. The Sultan, accompanied by his chief officers, goes to perform his devotions at Saint-Sophia. It was now, perhaps, six o'clock, and every neck was outstretched for the first sign of movement. Presently, a powerful band was heard, playing a Turkish march, arranged by Donizetti, the Sultan's musical director. The troops stood to their arms, and formed in line. These soldiers, forming a part of the imperial-guard, were dressed in white-trousers and red-jackets, not dissimilar to the undress of English grenadiers ; and with which the fez does not harmonise badly.

The officers mounted the superb horses, whom we had already seen kept in waiting by the *sais*.

The Sultan, arrived from his summer palace, directed his course towards Saint-Sophia. Now came the Grand Vizier, the Seraskier, the Capidan-Pasha, and the other Ministers, all clad in the straight frock-coat of the Reform, but so covered with gold embroidery, that it required a sharp eye, to detect any feature of European costume ; although, on the other hand, the tarbouch was not sufficient to Orientalise] it. They were surrounded by groups of officers, secretaries, and other subordinates, superbly dressed, and mounted (like their masters) upon magnificent horses. Then came Pachas, Beys of provinces, Agas, Selictars, and other officials, composing the four *odas* of the selamlick, whose strange names would convey no idea to the reader, and whose functions are :—this one to un-boot the Sultan,—that, to hold his stirrup,—and the other to hand him the napkin or escritoire ; and, finally, the *Tzouhadar*, or “ Chief of the pages,” the *Icoglans*, and a whole host of inferiors, forming the household of the Padischah.

Next, advanced a detachment of the body-guard, in a uniform somewhat more in keeping with our traditionary idea of Oriental splendour. These guards, selected for their superb appearance, wear tunics of velvet, embroidered with brandenburgs of gold of amazing richness; white trousers of silk, and caps shaped like an inverted mortar (resembling, in fact, those worn by the French presidents and judges); surmounted by immense plumes of peacock's feathers, of two or three feet in height. They are armed with curved sabres, suspended from a broad belt of the richest gold embroidery, and large gilded and damascened halberts, the blades of which are formed into those grotesque and ferocious-looking shapes, characteristic of the ancient Asiatic weapons.

To these, succeeded some half dozen superb horses,—barbs, or Arabians,—led by the hand, and caparisoned with housings and head-stalls, of inconceivable richness. These housings, embroidered with gold and starred with precious stones, were also enriched by the imperial cypher, the complications and interlacements of which compose a most elegant arabesque. These ornaments were so crowded, that the red or blue ground, formed by the material of the housings, was scarcely discernible. The luxury of these saddles and caparisons, takes, with the Turks, the place which with us is conceded to the ornamentation of our carriages; although, now, not a few of the pashas begin to import broughams or chariots, from Paris or Vienna.

These noble animals seemed to have a consciousness of their beauty. The light played upon the changeable gloss of their polished flanks; their manes flashed in sparkling waves at every movement of their graceful heads; they had that proud and yet gentle air, that look almost human, that elasticity of movement, and half coquetry of manner,

which form the aristocratic bearing of the Eastern steeds of pure race, and enable us to understand the semi-idolatry of the Orientals for these superb creatures, whose qualities are vaunted by the Koran itself, and the care of whom is recommended to the faithful, as if to add the obligation of religious duty, to the natural feeling of admiration, and almost of affection, which creatures so high in the scale of animal nature, and possessing such noble qualities, would even otherwise inspire.

These horses immediately preceded the Sultan, who was mounted upon another noble beast; whose housings glowed with rubies, topazes, pearls, emeralds and other precious stones, forming the "flowers" of a mass of golden foliage.

Behind the Sultan, marched the Kislär-Agassi and the Capou-Agassi, chiefs of the black and white eunuchs; then a corpulent dwarf, with ferocious visage, dressed like a pasha, and occupying towards his master the position of the jesters of the middle age. This little dwarf was stuck, doubtless for contrast, on top of a gigantic horse, which his short legs could hardly bestride. I suspect that he is the only one of his species, now existing in Europe; the only recognised "Court Jester;" and the office of Triboulet, Angeli, Wamba, etc., is perpetuated in Turkey alone.

The eunuchs no longer wear the lofty white cap, with which they are represented on the European stage. The fez and the single-breasted frock-coat, now form their dress; but they have not the less that peculiar aspect, which at once identifies them to the observer.

The Kislär-Agassi is hideous enough, with his beardless black face, marked by gray streaks; but the Capou-Agassi "beats him hollow," although without the advantage of a single negro feature. His face, covered with unwholesome fat and furrowed with livid folds, his two dead eyes shining from out a surface of parchment, and his

nerveless hanging lip, give him the air of an ill-tempered old woman.

But these two monsters are, nevertheless, most important and powerful personages. The revenues of Mecca and Medina are appropriated by them. They are immensely rich, and make foul or fair weather, at pleasure, in the seraglio; although their sway is greatly shorn of its proportions, within the last few years. It is, nevertheless, they who govern, despotically, those throngs of houris whose beauty is never profaned by human gaze; and they are, as one may suppose, the centre of thousands of intrigues.

A platoon of body-guards closed the line of march. This brilliant cortège, although less varied than formerly,—when all the wealth of Asia blazed in the fantastic costumes of the pashas, capidgi-pashas, bostandgis, maibaindzes, and janissaries, with their turbans, kalpacks, Circassian casques, antique arquebuses, maces, and bows and arrows—was still strikingly gorgeous and original. It disappeared, through the archway of the passage leading from the seraglio to Saint-Sophia; and after the lapse of about an hour, returned in the same order as it went.

During this interval, my companions and I placed ourselves upon a sort of “tribune,” formed by the planks which covered a well, situated in an immense court lined with large trees, and in close proximity to the kiosk, before the gate of which the ceremony of foot-kissing was to be performed.

In front of us extended a large building, surmounted by numerous columns, painted yellow and decorated with bases and capitals of white. These columns were chimneys, and the vast range of buildings kitchens; for every day,—to use the Oriental phrase,—“fifteen hundred mouths eat the bread of the Grand Seignior.”

We found it very difficult to maintain our stand on our perch, against the continual assaults of new "inquisitives," whom we were obliged to repulse by punches of the elbow; but, in the end, we remained masters of the position.

While awaiting the return of the procession, let us glance at the locality where the ceremonial is to be performed. It is a large kiosk, the roof of which, supported by pillars, projects on all sides of the building. These pillars, sculptured at base and summit in the style of the Alhambra, sustain arcades and recesses, formed by the projection of the roof and richly ornamented with lozenges and arabesques; the door, flanked by two recesses, opens amid a mass of carving of flowers and of arabesques, combined with more of profusion than of taste; as is too often the case in Turkish buildings.

Upon the wall, on each side the door, are painted two Chinese perspectives, similar to those we see in children's toys, and representing galleries, whose pavement, adorned with squares of alternate black and white, seems to extend itself into infinity. These absurd decorations must be the work of some Genoese glazier, made captive by the corsairs; and they produce a most extraordinary effect, thus plastered upon what is otherwise a perfect gem of Mussulman architecture and decoration.

The Sultan, followed by some of his chief dignitaries, now entered the kiosk, where he partook of a very slight collation. The interval thus created, was employed in the final preparations for the reception.

The attendants spread upon the ground, before the kiosk, between the two pillars of the arch which led to the entrance, a carpet or strip of black cachemere, on which they placed a throne; or more properly a divan, similar in form to a sofa, richly ornamented with carvings of gold

or silver-gilt, of Byzantine workmanship. Before this divan, was placed a footstool of similar style, and the band formed a semi-circle around, with their faces turned toward the kiosk.

When Abdul-Medjid re-appeared, the band executed a succession of flourishes, and the soldiers shouted "Long live the Sultan!" A genuine enthusiasm pervaded the whole crowd, and every one partook of the excitement, whether Turk or European.

The Sultan remained standing for a few minutes, and could be plainly scanned from head to foot. In his fez, a clasp of diamonds secured the plume of heron's feathers, which is the sign of supreme power; a sort of surtout of dark blue, fastened by a buckle of brilliants, partially concealed the embroidery of his superb uniform; and these, with white satin trousers, polished-leather boots, and exquisitely-fitting straw-coloured gloves, formed a dress, which, in its simplicity, outshone the gorgeous costumes of the subordinate personages around.

Presently, the Sultan seated himself, and the ceremonial began.

I have, already, given a hasty description of the person of the Sultan; but, as the ceremony of the Bairam lasts for at least two hours, I have time to add something to that hasty sketch.

Abdul-Medjid-Khan was born on the 11th of the month Chaaban, in the year 1238 of the Hegira (23rd April, 1823); and has, therefore, in this present year, (1853), attained the age of thirty years. Ascending the throne—where he succeeded the Sultan Mahmoud—at sixteen years of age, he has already reigned fourteen years. His impassive countenance appears, to me, to wear the air of profound satiety of power; an expression of fixed and intense ennui, always unchangeable, and eternal

as the snows of the mountains, seems to form a mask, as it were, of marble, upon his visage, and give sternness and permanence to features by no means regular. His nose has not the aquiline curve belonging to the strictly Turkish type; his cheeks are pale, marked with lines indicative of fatigue, and contrasted with a soft brown beard; and his forehead—in so far as the fez leaves it visible—seems large and full. His eyes, I can compare to nothing but suns of black, fixed in a sky of diamond. No object seems to reflect itself in them. One would suppose them the eyes of an ecstatic, absorbed by some vision not apparent to the vulgar gaze.

For the rest, his physiognomy is not sombre, nor terrible, nor cruel, but simply extra-human: I can find no better word. One felt, that this young man, seated like a deity upon a golden throne, had nothing more to desire in the world; that all the most golden dreams of humanity were, to him, but worn-out and insipid realities; and that he was gradually freezing out of the reach of the warm sympathies of our nature, in the frigid atmosphere of such utter solitude. In fact, that, from the height of his grandeur, he looked down upon the earth, as upon only a vague mist, from amid which the heads of the most elevated alone were visible; and even those beneath his feet!

They are only the highest dignitaries of the Mussulman empire, who have the right to kiss the feet of the glorious Sultan. This surpassing honour is reserved for the Vizier, the Ministers, and a few privileged Pashas.

The Vizier started from the angle of the kiosk which was at the right of the Sultan, described a semi-circle within the line formed by the guards and musicians; and, arriving in front of the throne, advanced to the footstool after performing the Oriental salutation; and there, bending

over the feet of his master, kissed his boot, as reverentially as a fervent Catholic could kiss the toe of the Pope. This done, he retired backward, and gave place to another.

Then followed the same salutation, the same genuflexion, the same prostration, and the same manner of approaching and retiring; performed by seven or eight of the foremost personages in the empire.

During these adorations, the countenance of the Sultan remained impassive and expressionless. His fixed dark eyes looked without seeing, like eyes of marble in a statue. No movement of a muscle, no play of countenance, nothing to induce a belief that he observed what was passing. In fact, the superb Padischa was evidently unable to see across the vast space which separated him from humanity; the humble worms which crawled in the dust at his feet. And yet his immobility had in it nothing offensive or overstrained. It was the mere aristocratic negligence and abstraction of "The Grand Seignior," receiving the homage which was his due, without giving himself a thought on the subject; the drowsy indifference of the deity fatigued by the adoration of his devotees, themselves too happy, in being permitted to adore him.

I could not help remarking, in looking upon the pashas whom the occasion had assembled, the universal corpulence of the persons of high degree in Turkey. They attain proportions literally monstrous; and to some of them, the performance of this ceremony was truly laborious. One can hardly conceive anything more grotesque, than the contortions of these unhappy men, compelled, with reverence and solemnity, to stoop to the earth and rise again; and some of them, whose breadth exceeded their height, narrowly escaped burying their noses in the ground and remaining extended at the feet of their master.

Beside these prodigious Turks, Lablache would seem slender and small; and this excess of corpulence overtakes the Turks at an early age, too. I have encountered, at the Sweet-waters of Europe and Asia, young sons of pashas, already encumbered with fat, at the age of ten or twelve years, and certainly weighing two hundred pounds. The horses which carried them were already bending beneath their monstrous weight.

By way of contrast, however, it is scarcely less remarkable, that all the inferior officials are made up of nothing but skin and bone; and thus are presented the extremes—literal caricatures—of fat and lean. The diminution of fat preserves an inverse mathematical proportion to the elevation of the grade of the individual. One would say, that office was distributed according to weight.

Next after the Pashas, in this act of homage, came the Sheik-ul-Islam, in his white caftan, and turban of the same colour, crossed in front by a band of gold. The Sheik-ul-Islam is the Mahometan Patriarch; next to the Sultan in the religious scale, and consequently exceedingly powerful and greatly revered. When, therefore, after the usual salutation, he was about to kiss the Sultan's foot, as the others had done, Abdul-Medjid broke, for the first time, his calm imperturbability, and, raising the Sheik graciously, prevented the actual performance of that homage.

The Ulemahs, or prelates of Islamism, then defiled before the Sultan; but, instead of kissing his foot, they were content with touching, with their lips, the hem of his surtout; not being sufficiently great personages to aspire to the more distinguished honour.

And here, a little incident disturbed the ceremony. A former "Scherif" of Mecca, who had been removed from office for his excess of fanaticism, approached and threw

himself at the feet of the Sultan; who, however, repulsed him sharply enough to prevent his performing any act of homage, and dismissed him with an imperious gesture of refusal. Two tall young men, almost mulattoes in complexion, and seemingly his sons, also essayed to throw themselves at the Sultan's feet, but were no better received; and the whole three were conducted out of the circle.

To the Ulemahs, succeeded other officials, civil or military, of less elevated grade, who could not presume to kiss either the boot or the robe; an end of the Sultan's sash, held by a pasha, offered its fringe of gold to their lips, at the extremity of the divan. Enough for them, to touch anything that had been in contact with their master. They came, one after another, described the entire circle, holding one hand to the forehead, and the other to the heart and, after bending to the earth, touched the scarf, and passed on. The dwarf, standing behind the throne, watched the whole, with the malicious grimace of an evil-disposed gnome.

During all this time, the band played airs from *l'Elisir d'Amore* and *Lucrezia Borgia*; the cannon thundered in the distance, and the pigeons, frightened from the eaves of Sultan-Bajazet, flew, in hurried circles, above the garden of the seraglio. When the last functionary had paid his homage, the Sultan re-entered his kiosk, amid tumultuous "*vivas*;" and we returned to Pera, to seek that breakfast, of which, by this time, we stood cruelly in need.

XXI.

THE CHARLEMAGNE.—FIRES.

PEOPLE had been, for a length of time, talking of the *Charlemagne*, whose arrival had been long expected, but she came not. She had come to be considered a chimerical ship, a myth, a ship *Argo*, or a “Flying Dutchman;” when lo! one fine morning, just when people had given over thinking about it, there appeared before the landing-place of Top-Hané, at the entrance of the Golden-Horn, a superb vessel bearing the tri-coloured flag, displaying on her cut-water a bust of the Emperor, and on her stern, carved in letters of gold, the name *Charlemagne*!

How came she there? By what magic did she find herself at once in the middle of the harbour?

Along her sides, frowning with the port-holes of a triple row of cannon, no trace of paddle-boxes for her wheels; on her deck, no appearance of a funnel; and on her yards, sails furled and clewed; while from her mast streamed a pennant, fluttered by a wind directly adverse to the course by which she must have come. It was incomprehensible!

So the worthy Moslemah adopted the only sensible solution of the difficulty; and it became quite understood among the people, that it was a magical ship, manned by Djinns and Afrites.

But, said everybody, diplomatic difficulties, raised by

Austria and Russia, oppose the entry of the *Charlemagne*, into the strait where no man-of-war may enter, without a firman. The firman, however, was granted; and to legitimatise, even more thoroughly, the presence of such a vessel in the waters of the Golden-Horn, the Ambassador of France had arrived on board the *Charlemagne*; which smoothed everything. The *Charlemagne* became (by presence of the Ambassador) France; and now, also, could be satisfied the curiosity of the Capitan-Pasha, who was most desirous to see a screw-auxiliary steam-ship.

The caiques rowed timidly around this marine colossus, like herrings around a whale; fearing, apparently, some blow from tail or fin; but at length some, bolder than the rest, ventured to approach her black and frowning sides, and certain daring visitors climbed over her bulwarks. I was one of these last. In setting foot on her deck, the first face I encountered was that of my old and dear friend, Giraud, smiling from behind his brown moustache, as I had once before encountered him in Spain; and I received him with a *salaamleek*, sufficiently Oriental to show that I was "acclimatised."

I then proceeded to pay my respects to the Ambassador, to whom I was slightly known, and who received me with great courtesy. Afterward, Giraud presented me to his friends, the officers, and I made the tour of the three decks of the ship; a promenade always surprising, even when not new; for a vessel of war is one of the most prodigious realisations of human power. Twelve or thirteen hundred men, swarming, eating, sleeping, manœuvring, without the least confusion, in a space crowded with eighty gigantic cannon, an engine as large as a house of two storeys, a powder magazine, a coal store-room, a kitchen, and provisions for all these men for many months! It is, at once, a town, a fortress, and a locomotive!

The Dutch housewives, who think themselves such patterns of cleanliness, are but sluts beside the seamen, whom no one can approach in the arts of sweeping, washing, holy-stoning, polishing, and giving lustre to every object. Not a stain on the planks, not a spot of rust, or of tarnish, on the irons or the brasses; all shines, all glows. The mahogany of an English tea-table, is less bright and clean than the deck of a man-of-war. To adopt an expressive popular phrase,—“You may eat your soup off it;” and among all these ropes, of which every one has its name, and which cross and interlace like the threads of a spider’s web, no single knot or entanglement; not an error, not the slenderest halyard out of place; they all run and glide through their pulleys, and are made fast at the proper points, with an order and exactitude, as admirable as wonderful!

I returned to land, where the *Charlemagne* was still the one subject of discussion. Her screw entirely submerged, her funnel sinking into itself like an opera-glass, and leaving her all the appearance of a sailing ship; so that it was not until subsequently, when she made an excursion to Therapia, that the astonished caidjis incredulously recognised her as a steamer, on seeing the smoke issue from the chimney which rose through her deck as by enchantment, and witnessing the foam and swell, which made their fragile vessels roll and toss in her wake.

The next day, the Ambassador landed with due official ceremony, and was received by the French residents; all of whom, forgetting political differences, remembered, at such a moment, only the dear brotherhood of home, and thought only of the *Alma Mater*,—the common mother.

The arrival of the *Charlemagne* had caused a considerable popular effervescence among the Turks, and

there was some apprehension of insult or violence to our cortége ; but the little caravan reached, safely and unmolested, the palace of the embassy, despite the looks askance of the old fanatics who regretted the times of the Janissaries ; and could not allow a Frank to pass, without growling at him, through their teeth, the traditionary insult, of “ Dog of a Christian ! ”

The presence of the *Charlemagne* at Constantinople, coincided remarkably with the occurrence of an unparalleled number of *fires* ; not less than fourteen, occurred in one week ; and most of them very serious.

To what were they attributable ? To the extreme dryness of the weather, which transformed these houses of planks and plaster almost into tinder, ready to ignite with the least spark ? Or, to the witchcraft and fire-scattering of this mysterious steamer, without wheel and without chimney, to which the populace attributed the whole evil ? Or, to the corporations of carpenters, anxious for work ? Or, finally, to a political cause, and the act of deliberate incendiaries ; as was believed by those best able to judge ?

At the close of the Ramadan, which, by its fasts and its devotional exercises, tends to excite the imagination greatly, there is very often manifested an effervescence of fanaticism ; and this fermentation of spirits was not favourable to Redschiid Pasha, then minister, accused of a leaning toward European ideas, and regarded as almost a Giaour by the old Turks in green caftans and large turbans, to whom all the “ reformed ” ideas are horrible and impious. Although there is a French newspaper, very ably conducted, at Constantinople, yet, as this journal is assisted by the government, the opposition, instead of disputing its articles, set fire to a street ; a significant

manner of testifying their discontent, certainly. At least, it is said that this is the case; and it certainly was a recognised means of expressing dissatisfaction on the part of the Janissaries, whose fall these worthies deplore.

Others, again, see, in these fires, which break out in one quarter of the city as soon as quenched in another, the torch, or at least the "lucifer-match," of Russia, endeavouring to prejudice the people against France; but the courage with which the crew of the *Charlemagne*, led by M. Rigaud de Genouilly, dashed into the midst of all these fires, mounting, axe in hand, upon the burning houses, and disputing with the flames for their victims, went far to secure for us the general good opinion. Redschild Pasha was also superseded by Fuad Effendi; which, although the latter is a follower of his policy, was regarded as a concession; and *directly afterward the fires ceased*; perhaps naturally, perhaps from that cause.

With a town built almost entirely of wood, and the indirect co-operation of the negligence produced by Turkish fatalism, "fires" may, perhaps, be considered as constituting the normal condition at Constantinople. A house sixty years old is a rarity. Except the mosques, aqueducts, walls, and fountains, together with a few Greek houses in Phanaris, and some Genoese buildings at Galata, all is wood. Past ages have left no witness on the soil, perpetually swept by flame. The face of the town renews itself every half-century, although, perhaps, without much change. I do not speak of Pera, that Marseilles of the Orient, where, in place of every shanty burned down, there rises a mansion of stone, and which will soon be a town altogether European in character.

On the summit of the Seraskier's Tower—a white tower of prodigious height, rising against the sky, not far from the domes and minarets of Sultan-Bajazet,—stands

perpetually, a watchman, whose duty it is to look narrowly, whether, in any quarter of the horizon of the immense panorama that lies unrolled at his feet, any gush of dark smoke, any red jet of flame, bursts through the interstices of a roof. When the watchman perceives the outbreak of a fire, he hangs out, from the summit of his tower, a basket if by day, or a lantern by night, to indicate the quarter of the town in which it is situated ; the cannon thunders out the alarm, and through the awakened streets rings, in sinister tones, the lugubrious cry of *Stamboul hiangin var !* Every one is aroused, and the water-carriers, who are also the firemen, rush at racing speed in the direction indicated by the signal.

A similar watch is constantly maintained on the summit of the Tower of Galata, which is almost directly opposite to the Seraskier's Tower, on the other side of the Golden-Horn.

The Sultan, the Viziers, and the Pashas, are bound to be present, in person, at all fires of importance. If the Sultan has even retired into the recesses of his harem, and a fire breaks out, his sanctuary is not safe from intrusion. An odalisque, clad in scarlet, and wearing a turban of the same colour, penetrates to the chamber, raises the tapestry which covers the doorway, and stands before him, silent and sinister. The appearance of this flame-coloured phantom, announces to the Sultan that there is a fire in Constantinople, and summons him to do his duty as a sovereign.¹

I was sitting one day upon a tomb, in the lesser

¹ How far this popular belief is literally true, is difficult to ascertain ; but it is certain that such *is* the popular belief, and that the Sultan and his chief officers of state are always present at great fires. "An hour" is understood to be the limit, beyond which, if a fire continues, the Sultan is bound to attend.—TRANS.

cemetery of Pera, when I observed, rising above the cypresses, a wreath of blue smoke, which speedily became yellow, and then black, and was presently streaked with jets of flame; the latter scarcely visible, however, in the brilliant sunlight. I sprang up and sought an open spot, whence I saw, in an instant, that the quarter called "Kassim-Pasha" was in flames.

This Kassim-Pasha is a miserable region, peopled by wretches equally miserable,—Jews and Armenians,—and shut in between the arsenal and the cemetery.

I descended the principal street, composed of shanties, hovels, and buildings in the last stages of dilapidation, and the centre of which is occupied by a gutter or open sewer, crossed at frequent intervals by culverts. The fire was already burning furiously, in the immediate vicinity of a mosque, whose minaret (looking more than usually like a tall candle surmounted by a tin extinguisher) I expected, every moment, to see melting in the flames; but a sudden change of wind drove them in another direction, and threatened a quarter which had before seemed safe.

The street was crowded by negresses carrying mattresses; porters laden with chests; men saving their pipe-stems; frightened-looking women, with a child in one hand and a bundle of clothing in the other; soldiers and *cawas* armed with long hooks; *saccas* rushing through the crowd, carrying their pumps on their shoulders, and mounted men galloping along without the least regard for the foot-passengers. Every one elbowing, pushing, and hustling, with an accompaniment of shouts and imprecations, in every conceivable dialect of almost every conceivable language.

The tumult was at its height.

During all this time, the fire was spreading, and en-

larging the circle of its ravages. Fearing to be trodden under foot in this increasing and maddened crowd, I regained the height of Pera; and, seating myself again upon a funeral column, I sat, in company with Turks, Greeks, and Franks, watching the fearful spectacle which unrolled itself at foot of the hill.

The burning rays of noonday fell perpendicularly upon the brown-tiled roofs, or wooden sheds, of Kassim-Pasha, the houses of which lighted in succession, like the fusees of a set of fireworks. Now you would see a little wreath of white smoke issuing from some crevice, then a little tongue of scarlet intermingled with the white smoke, then the whole roof became clouded, the windows began to gleam with red; presently the flames burst forth in every direction, and, in an inconceivably small number of minutes, the house was in ashes!

Against a back-ground of flames, on the walls and summits of the burning houses, stood out, in black profile, the figures of the men who threw water upon the neighbouring walls, to prevent their also igniting; all attempts to quench such inflammable materials, when once freely in flames, being hopeless; while others, with axes and hooks, threw down masses of building, to restrain the fire within certain limits, for sheer lack of food to prey upon.

The saccas, standing upon transverse beams, directed the hose of their pumps against the flames; and, from a distance, these pumps, with their long coils of flexible leather pipe and spouts of bright metal, had the air of angry serpents combating some gigantic fiery dragon, who was vomiting forth sparks and flame, to repel his antagonists; while the latter returned to the attack, hissing and furious, wielding a watery lance which sparkled like diamonds in the surrounding glow.

After often abating and rekindling, the fire died out

for lack of "pasturage;" and there remained only the smoke which slowly rose from among blackened heaps of ashes and cinders.

The next day, I visited the scene of the disaster. Two or three hundred houses had been burned; and this was a small matter, if one considers the extreme inflammability of the materials, of which the whole region was built. The mosque, protected by its walls and arches of stone, rested intact. Upon the spot where the wooden buildings had stood, remained only the brick chimneys, which had resisted the flames. They had a strange effect, these red obelisks, alone standing, in memory of the buildings which had surrounded them the day before. They looked somewhat like gigantic skittles, planted there to be bowled at by Typhon or Briareus.

Amid the yet hot and smoking ruins of the houses, the former proprietors had already constructed some sort of habitation, by means of rush mats, old carpets, and pieces of calico or canvas, supported by stakes; and were smoking their pipes, with all the resignation of Oriental fatalism. Horses were fastened to stakes, in the place where their stable had once stood; fragments of old partitions, and bits of plank nailed together, reconstituted the harem; a cawadji was making coffee, over the furnace, which alone remained of his shop; upon the ancient site of which, sat cross-legged, in the ashes, his faithful customers. Farther on, some bakers were digging out, with wooden shovels, heaps of grain, of which the flame had scorched only the upper portion; poor devils were seeking, amid the half-extinguished cinders, nails and bits of iron,—the remains of their fortunes,—but without having any aspect of special despondency. I did not see, at Kassim-Pasha, those groups, lost, wailing, and utterly in despair, which a similar calamity would collect, in France, among the

ruins of a village or a district destroyed by fire. In fact, it seems, that to be burned-out, is, at Constantinople, rather a matter of course.

I followed to the Golden-Horn, and near the arsenal, the pathway traced by the fire. The heat was terrific, and augmented by a burning sun. I walked upon hot coals, ill-covered by treacherous and crumbling cinders; among ruins half consumed, planks, beams, fragments of divans and counters; now over spots of gray, now of black, through stifling smoke, and reflections of sunlight hot enough to cook an egg. Then I passed through a street somewhat picturesque, along which ran a gutter, choked with old shoes and fragments of crockery, and offering, with its two tottering bridges, a subject for an artist; and was, at length, more glad than I cared to acknowledge, to find myself on firm earth, and safe from the volcanic soil, which for the previous three hours I had been treading at no small risk.

I had seen a fire by day; it remained to see one by night, and I was not destined to wait long.

One evening, a purple light, not dissimilar to that caused by the aurora-borealis, tinged the heavens on the other side of the Golden-Horn. I was taking an ice in the Little Field, and descended instantly to Top-Hané, to secure a caique for a passage to the scene of the disaster; when, in passing near the tower of Galata, one of my Constantinople friends, who accompanied me, suggested the idea of ascending the tower, to witness from its summit the scene on the opposite side of the water. A liberal *baschich* removed the scruples of the keeper; and we began to climb in the darkness, trying each step before we ventured upon it, following the wall with our hands, and ascending a steep spiral staircase, interrupted at frequent intervals by barriers and doors. At length we reached the

lantern ; and, walking upon the plates of brass which cover its floor, we fixed ourselves, at last, on the ledge of the masonry with which the summit of the tower is crowned.

It was the storehouses of oil and tallow which were on fire. These buildings are situated on the verge of the water, which, in reflecting the flames, produced the appearance of a double fire. Long lines of light, rippled by the oscillation of the water, extended over the Golden-Horn, making it resemble a vast bowl of flaming punch. The fire rose to a tremendous height,—red, blue, yellow, or green, according to the material burning at the moment. At intervals, a more intense phosphorescence, a light more incandescent, sparkled amid the general glow. Millions of burning flakes soared in the air, like the gold and silver rain of a rocket ; and, despite the distance, we could hear plainly the crackling of the flames. Over the fire, writhed and heaved enormous masses of smoke, dark on the one side, and glowing with every varied shade of red upon the other, like clouds at sunset. The Seraskier's Tower, Yeni-Djami, the Suleimanieh, the mosque of Achmet, and above, upon the crest of the hill, the arches of the ancient aqueduct, shone with rosy light. The shipping in the harbour loomed in clear black outline, against the fiery back-ground. Two or three small vessels, nearest to the scene of destruction, took fire, and for the moment a general conflagration among the shipping seemed imminent ; but the danger was soon overcome.

Despite the cold wind, which chilled us at that elevation,—for we were very lightly clad, my companion and myself,—we could not withdraw from the contemplation of this spectacle of disastrous magnificence ; which, by its splendour, made us understand, and half-excuse, Nero enjoying the sight of burning Rome, from the Palatine Tower.

It was indeed a splendid illumination. Fire-works of a hundred times multiplied power, with effects that pyrotechnic art cannot hope to imitate; and as we had not the remorse of having caused it, nor any power to check its ravages, we could at least enjoy the scene as artists, while not the less deploring so grave a calamity.

Two or three days afterwards, Pera took fire in its turn. The tekké of the Dancing Dervishes was speedily invaded by the flames; and there I witnessed a striking specimen of Oriental immobility. The chief of the dervishes sat on his carpet, smoking his pipe, and moving from time to time, as the fire intruded upon his resting-place!

The little bit of cemetery, which extends in front of the tekké, was rapidly heaped with all manner of articles, utensils, merchandise, and moveables, from the endangered or burning houses; and which, especially the more fragile of them, were often precipitated from the windows to save time. The most grotesque heaps were scattered upon the tombs, in a pell-mell as frightful as it was absurd. The population of the quarter—mostly Christian—displayed none of the resignation, which I had observed in the Turks under similar circumstances. The women howled or wept, seated among the wreck of their goods.

Vociferations blended from all quarters; the disorder and tumult were fearful. At length, when the conflagration began to abate, and its extent could be seen, it appeared that, from the tekké to the foot of the hill, there remained only chimneys standing.

In the most serious disasters, there are, almost always, some burlesque incidents; and it was so here. I saw a man literally risk his life to save some bits of stove-pipe; and innumerable instances of persons, in their bewilder-

ment, clinging to things utterly valueless, and rejecting, or unconsciously destroying, what they would have wished to save.

A picturesque effect was produced by the cypresses in the garden of the tekké, which, drying-up before the flames, and turning yellow, then took fire, and blazed from all their limbs, like huge, many-branched candelabra.

Only two or three nights afterwards, Pera was illuminated at the other side, near the Great Cemetery. Some twenty wooden-houses burned like matches, sending flame and sparks far up into the blue of the night, despite the floods of water with which they were inundated. The great street of Pera presented a most sinister aspect; companies of saccas, pump on shoulder, dashed along, oversetting everything in their passage, as it is their privilege to do (and a privilege in the exercise of which they seem to find a malicious satisfaction); *mushires* on horseback, followed by a crowd of vagabonds, rattled through the street, to the great risk of all foot-passengers; the dogs, alarmed by the noise, the light, and the crowd, for once shrank from the highway, and gathering in by-places, or flying in packs, uttered the most prolonged and dismal howls; men and women passed along bending beneath huge burdens; grooms endeavoured to lead and pacify horses, half-mad with excitement and affright:—the whole was, at once, terrible and magnificent.

Fortunately, the intervention of some lofty houses of stone prevented the further spread of the conflagration, and it burned itself out.

In the same week, Psammathia, a Greek quarter of Constantinople, became, also, a prey to the flames. *Two thousand five hundred houses were burned!*

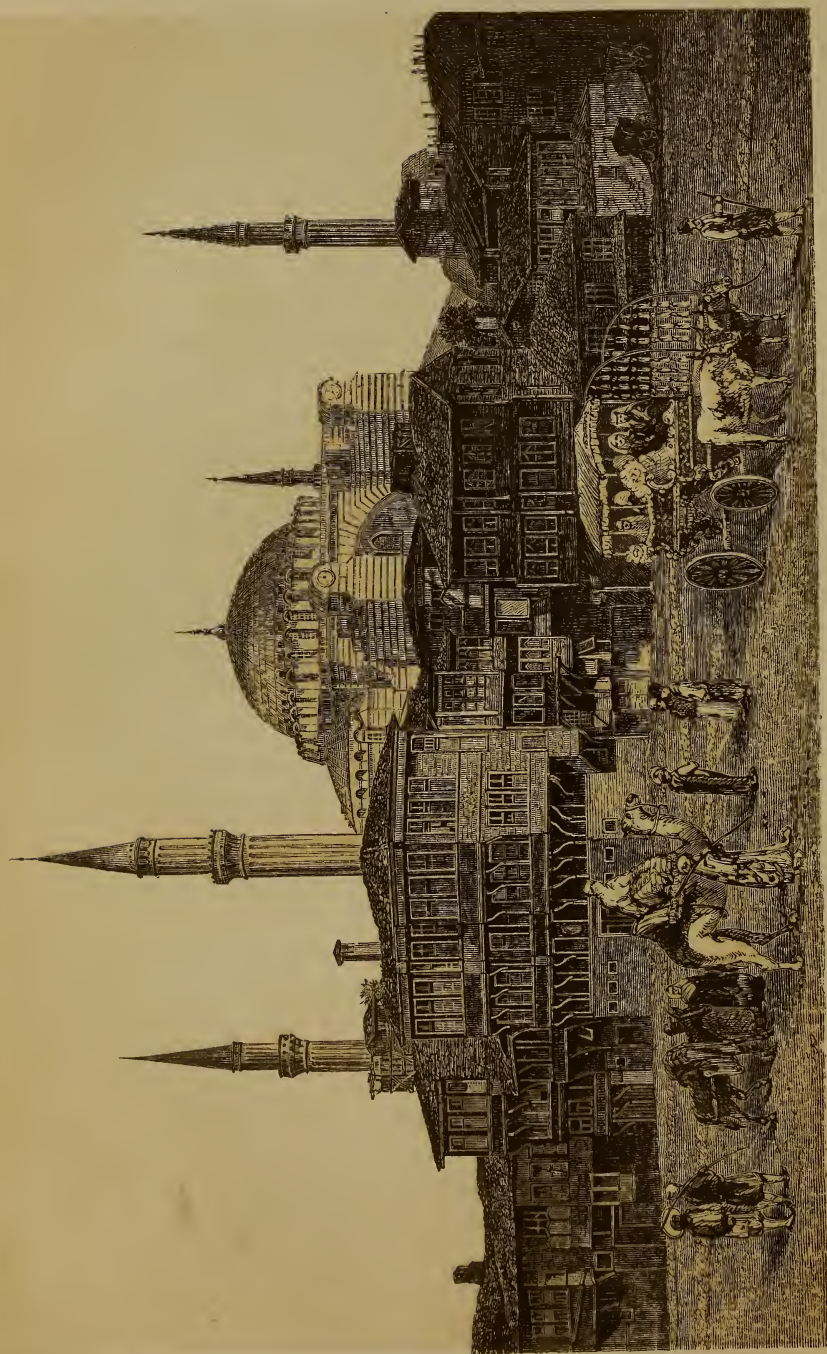
Afterward, Scutari took fire in its turn!

At each moment the sky glowed with red, in one

quarter or another, and the watchmen, on the Seraskier's Tower and the Tower of Galata, were weary with the repetition of their fearful signal. It seemed as if the demon of conflagration waved his torch over the city, and had doomed it to utter destruction!

At length, however, all was extinguished—the fires ceased, and the recent disasters were speedily forgotten; with that happy carelessness of past misfortune, without which the life of humanity would be a burthen beyond endurance.

The coincidence with the arrival of the *Charlemagne*, was, however, not the less remarkable; nor will the various surmises, arising from that coincidence, cease to afford anxious food for speculation, and for inquiry into the causes—political, social, international, or accidental—which occasioned so many, and such disastrous fires, at that precise period.



SAINT SOPHIA, FROM THE HIPPODROME.

XXII.

SAINT-SOPHIA.—THE MOSQUES.

It would be dangerous for a Giaour to penetrate to the interior of the mosques during the Ramadan, even with a firman and attended by cawas. The exhortations of the Imans excite, among the faithful, a double amount of fervour and fanaticism; and the action of the fast heats the brain, until the habitual tolerance, produced by the progress of civilisation, is easily forgotten. I awaited, therefore, until after the Bairam, before making this essential part of my tour of observation.

It is usual to commence the series with Saint-Sophia, the most ancient and most important building of Constantinople, which, before being a mosque, had been a Christian church; not dedicated, however, as its name might suggest, to a particular saint, but to the Divine Wisdom, "*Agia-Sophia*," personified by the Greeks, and, according to their teaching, mother of the three theological virtues.

After having once seen, from the space which extends in front of the Augustan Gate, the back—enriched with delicate carvings and inscriptions—of the fountain of Achmet III., Saint-Sophia presents but an ill-assorted mass of misshapen constructions. The original plan has disappeared, beneath an aggregation of excrescences and additions, which have obliterated the primitive outlines, and rendered it almost impossible to retrace them.

Between the buttresses erected by Amurath III., to support the walls, shaken by repeated earthquakes, are crowded tombs, shops, baths and stalls.

Above this miscellaneous gathering, rises, amid four heavy minarets, the great cupola, supported upon the walls by courses of masonry, alternately white and pink, and encircled, as by a tiara, with a range of latticed windows. The minarets have not the graceful slenderness of the Arabic style, and the cupolas rest heavily upon the unadorned stone-work; and the traveller, whose imagination has been stimulated by the magical name of "Saint-Sophia" (reminding him of the temples of Ephesus and of Solomon), experiences a disappointment, which, fortunately, does not continue, after he has once reached the interior of the edifice.

To reach the entrance of the mosque, the visitor follows a narrow street, lined with sycamores, and with turbés whose gilded and painted stone-work gleams vaguely through their gratings; and he arrives, after a few divergences, in front of a gate of bronze, one leaf of which still retains the imprint of the Greek cross. This is a side entrance, which gives access to a vestibule pierced with nine doors. At this point, the visitor exchanges his boots or shoes for slippers, which it is important to have brought by the dragoman; because to enter the mosque in boots, would be as palpable an irreverence as to keep one's hat on, in a Catholic church; and might, moreover, entail results by no means agreeable to the offender.

At the first step within, I was struck with amazement. I seemed to be at Venice, and entering from the Piazza, beneath the nave of Saint-Mark; only that the dimensions had enlarged immeasurably, and assumed colossal proportions. The columns rose gigantic, from the mat-covered pavement; the dome of the cupola hung overhead, like

the arch of the sky ; the galleries, in which the four sacred streams pour forth their waters in mosaic, described immeasurable circuits ; the tribunals seemed destined to contain whole nations ! Saint-Mark, in fact, is but a miniature of Saint-Sophia ; reduced, on the scale of an inch to a foot, from the basilica of Justinian. Nor is there anything surprising in this ; for Venice, separated by only a narrow sea from Greece, lived always in familiarity with the Orient ; and her architects would naturally seek to reproduce the type of that church, which was then considered the richest and the most beautiful of all Christendon. The erection of Saint-Mark was commenced about the tenth century ; and its architects would have been able to see Saint-Sophia, in all its integrity and splendour, before it had been profaned by Mahomet II. ; an event which did not take place until A. D. 1453.

The existing Saint-Sophia was erected upon the ashes of the temple consecrated to "The Wisdom Divine," by Constantine the Great, which had been burned during the tumults of the contest between the "greens" and the "blues," and whose antiquity was founded upon an antiquity even more remote. Anthemius of Tralles and Isidore of Miletus, in tracing its foundations, directed its reconstruction.

To enrich the new church, the ancient pagan temples were despoiled ; and the dome of Christ's Church was supported by the columns of the temple of "Diana of the Ephesians," still black from the torch of Erostratus, and the pillars of the "Temple of the Sun" at Palmyra, still gilded with the emblem of their original worship. From the ruins of Pergamus, were taken two enormous urns of porphyry, whose "lustral waters" gave place to the consecrated water of Christian baptism, and, later still, of Mahometan ablution. The walls were adorned with

mosaics of gold and gems ; and when the work was completed, Justinian might well exclaim, in delighted admiration, “ Glory be to God, who has esteemed me worthy to achieve a work so sublime ! Oh, Solomon ! I have surpassed thee ! ”

Although Islamism, in its hostility to the pictorial and plastic arts, has despoiled Saint-Sophia of the greater part of its noblest ornaments, it is still a magnificent edifice. The mosaics, upon a ground of gold, representing Scriptural subjects, like those of Saint-Mark, have disappeared beneath a coating of lime. They have preserved the four gigantic cherubim of the galleries ; the six wings of each shine through the scintillations of masses of gilded crystal ; but the heads of these masses of gorgeous plumage are hidden behind enormous golden suns ; the representation of the human face being the especial horror of the Moslemah. At the end of the sanctuary, beneath the oven-like arch which forms its termination, are vaguely traceable the outlines of a colossal figure, which the deposit of the lime has not altogether obliterated : this was the image of the patron of the church,—an embodiment of the Divine Wisdom in an individual form, the *Agia-Sophia* ; and which, beneath this half-transparent veil, still presides over the ceremonies of a hostile faith.

The statues have been removed. The altar, made of an unknown metal,—the result, like the Corinthian brass, of a combination of gold, silver, bronze, iron, and precious stones, in a state of fusion,—is replaced by a slab of red marble, indicating the direction of Mecca. Above, hangs an old and worn carpet, a mere dirty rag, which possesses, for the Turks, the unspeakable merit, of being one of the four carpets on which Mahomet himself knelt to perform his devotions.

Immense green disks, given by different Sultans, are

attached to the walls, and inscribed with verses from the Koran, or pious maxims, written in enormous golden letters. A scroll of porphyry, bears the names of Allah, of Mahomet, and of the first four Kalifs: Abu-Bekir, Omar, Osman, and Ali. The pulpit (*nimbar*), where the *khatib* stands to read the Koran, is placed against one of the pillars, and is reached by a steep staircase, decorated with two balustrades of open carving, of a delicacy unsurpassed by that of the finest lace. The reader always ascends with the Book of the Law in one hand and a drawn sabre in the other, as in a conquered mosque.

Cords, from which are suspended tufts of silk, and ostrich eggs, hang from the dome to within ten or twelve feet of the floor, sustaining circles of iron wire, decorated with lamps to form a chandelier. Desks in the form of an X, similar to those which we use to support portfolios of engravings—in fact, a sort of tressels—are dispersed about the mosque, to support manuscripts of the Koran. Many are ornamented with enamel, or delicate inlayings of brass, or mother-of-pearl.

Mats of rushes in the summer, and carpets in the winter, cover the pavement, formed of slabs of marble, the veins of which are skilfully arranged, to give the appearance of three streams, congealed, as they flow in wavy undulations through the edifice. The mats also present a singular peculiarity; they are placed obliquely, and contrary to the lines of the architecture; like the planks of a floor, placed diagonally, instead of parallel, to the walls which enclose them. But this strange peculiarity is soon explained. Saint-Sophia was not originally designed for a mosque, and consequently does not stand in the proper direction, relatively to Mecca.

Many of the mosques much resemble, internally, Protestant churches, or rather “chapels.” Art is not there

allowed to display its elegancies. Pious inscriptions, a pulpit, reading desks, mats to cover the floors; and you have all the "ornament" that is permitted. The one idea of DEITY should fill His temple, and is sufficiently vast to do so unassisted.

I admit, however, that the artistic elegance of the Catholic and Episcopal churches, seems to me preferable; and the alleged danger of idolatry, is to be feared only among a barbarous and ignorant people, incapable of distinguishing the form from the spirit—the image from the idea. There is also, certainly, an express indication of reverence and adoration, in the mere fact of thus enriching our temples; and, if it be esteemed becoming to adorn the halls in which we do honour to earthly potentates, how much more, the palaces which we dedicate to the KING of KINGS!

The chief cupola of Saint-Sophia, a little broken in its curve, is surrounded by several half-domes, like those of Saint-Mark. It is of immense height, and must have shone like a sun of gold and mosaic, before the Moslem coating of lime extinguished its splendours. But, such as it was, it produced upon me an impression even more startling than the dome of Saint-Peter. The Byzantine architecture is certainly the style necessary for Catholicism. Even Gothic architecture, whatever its religious value, is not so perfectly adapted to this object. Despite its deteriorations of all sorts, Saint-Sophia still stands above all other Christian churches that I have seen; and I have seen many. Nothing can equal the majesty of its domes; the tribunes resting against its columns of jasper, of porphyry, and of verd-antique, with their strange Corinthian capitals; or the animals, the chimeras, and the crosses, enlaced among its sculptured foilage. The superb art of Greece, although degenerate, still makes itself felt;

and one can understand that when Christ enters the temple, Jupiter must go forth.

Some years since, Saint-Sophia was menaced with destruction. The walls began to bulge, fissures to appear in the domes, and the pavement to undulate; and the columns, fatigued, perhaps, with standing so long upright, leaned in all directions, like drunken men. Nothing was in line; the whole building leaned visibly on one side; and, despite the buttresses erected by Amurath, the church-mosque, worn by the lapse of centuries and shaken by repeated earthquakes, appeared tottering to its fall.

An exceedingly capable Tessinese architect, however, (Signor Fossati), undertook the difficult task of rescuing this noble monument of antiquity from ruin; which he effected by under-pinning, portion by portion, with indefatigable caution and activity. Bands of brass were thrown about the riven pillars; supporters of iron propped the sinking arches; massive ground-works sustained the trembling walls; the crevices were filled up; the crumbling stones replaced by those of fresher and stronger quality; masses of masonry, whose purpose was skilfully disguised under the garb of ornament, were made to bear the enormous weight of the cupola; and, at length, thanks to this elaborate and skilful restoration, Saint-Sophia could still promise itself many centuries of existence.

During the progress of the works, Signor Fossati had the curiosity to exhume many of the primitive mosaics, from the bed of lime in which they were buried; and, before covering them again, he caused them to be carefully copied; a proceeding, the fruits of which, it is to be hoped, may be one day given to the world.

These mosaics are those of the cupola and the demi-domes. The others, which decorate the lower walls, may be regarded as destroyed. The *mollahs* remove, almost

daily, with their knives, cubes of crystal, covered with gold leaf, and sell them to strangers. I myself possess some half-dozen of these, detached in my presence; for, although I am *not* one of those tourists who break off the noses of statues, as a souvenir of the monuments they have visited, I could not disappoint the hope of a gratuity which inspired the worthy Moslem who offered me these memorials.

From the height of the tribunes (which are reached by gentle winding slopes, as in the Giralda or the Campanilla), an admirable view of the mosque is obtained. At this moment, some faithful believers, kneeling upon the matting, are devoutly performing their prostrations; two or three females, wrapped in their feredgés, stand near one of the doors, and a porter, with his head supported on the base of a pillar, is sleeping with all his might. A soft and tender light falls from the elevated windows; and I can see, in the distant recess, opposite the pulpit, the sparkle of the golden gratings of the tribune reserved for the Sultan.

A species of platform, supported by columns of finest marble and ornamented with carved railings, rises at each point of intersection of the aisles. In the side-chapels (useless in the Mussulman ritual), are heaped trunks, boxes, and packages of all kinds; for, in the East, the mosques serve as store-houses, and those who are going away on a journey, or who fear being robbed at home, deposit their wealth under the immediate protection of Allah; and there has never been an instance of the loss of a farthing under such circumstances, for theft would need to combine itself with sacrilege. Heaps of dust accumulate upon masses of gold, or of precious objects, scarcely covered with wrappers of coarse cloth, or old leather; and the spider, so cherished among the Turks, for having

thrown his web across the mouth of the cave in which the Prophet was concealed, weaves his thread peacefully about the locks, which no one takes the trouble to use.

Around the mosque are grouped hospitals, colleges, baths, and kitchens for the poor ; for the whole of Moslem life gathers around the house of God. People without home sleep beneath the arches, where no police disturb them, for they are the guests of Allah. The faithful pray there ; the females go there to dream away their time ; and the sick are transported thither, to be cured or to die. In the East, the present life is never separated from religion and the thought of the future.

I sought in vain, in Saint-Sophia, for the imprint of the bloody hand, which Mahomet II., dashing, on horseback, into the sanctuary, imprinted upon the wall, in sign of taking possession as conqueror, while the women and maidens were crowded round the altar as a last refuge from the besieging army, and expecting rescue by a miracle, which did not occur. This bloody imprint of the conqueror's hand—is it an historical fact, or only an idle legend ?

While writing the word “legend,” I recall a remarkable one, which is current at Constantinople, and to which the events of the day give a peculiar interest.

When the gates of Saint-Sophia gave way, beneath the pressure of the barbarian hordes who stormed the city of Constantine, a priest was before the altar, performing mass. At the noise made upon the pavement of Justinian by the hoofs of the Tartar horses, the shouts of the soldiers, and the terrific cries of the Moslems, the priest paused in his sacred office, took with him the sacramental vases, and retired towards one of the side isles, with a calm and deliberate step. The soldiers brandished their swords, as if to slaughter the priest, when he suddenly disappeared, through a wall which opened to receive him ;

by means, as one would suppose, of a secret door; but no, the wall was firm, compact, impenetrable. The priest had passed through a mass of solid masonry.

Sometimes are heard, even now (it is said), faint notes of psalmody, through the thickness of the wall. It is the saintly father, still living, who repeats, in his miraculous sleep, portions of his interrupted liturgy. When Saint-Sophia shall be again restored to Christian worship, the wall will once more open of itself, and the priest, issuing from his long retreat, will return, to finish, at the altar, the mass commenced four hundred years before.

If, according to invariable rule in these legendary predictions, we allow the additional "one year," which completes the mystic period (as does the "one day," in the term of "a year and a day," so well known in all magical tales); and assume that four hundred and one years complete the tale of the predicted time, the 29th of May, in this present year (1854), will be the day on which the sleeping priest should again cross the nave of Saint-Sophia, and mount, with phantom-tread, the steps of the altar of Justinian, to consummate his mutilated rites. It is strange, at least, that the events of this epoch, should have rendered a Christian re-occupation of Saint-Sophia within the prescribed period (at one moment), no very remote possibility; but whether it is *still* to be accomplished, is another question, under the present aspects.¹

On issuing from Saint-Sophia, I visited several other mosques.

That of Sultan-Achmet, situated near the Atmeidan, is one of the most remarkable. It presents the pecu-

¹ Perhaps the opinion of the Anglo-French allied forces, might, now, have some weight in furnishing a reply to this question.—
TRANS.

liarity of having six minarets, which has given it the designation, in Turkish, of “Alti-Minareli-Djami;” and I mention this, because it gave occasion, during the erection of the edifice, to a fierce debate between the Sultan and the Iman of Mecca. The Iman declared that the Sultan was about to commit an act of sacrilege; for that no other mosque should presume to rival in splendour the most holy *Kaaba* of Mecca, flanked by just that number of minarets. The works were suspended, and the mosque was in danger of never being finished, when the Sultan, being a man of intelligence, discovered an ingenious subterfuge to close the mouth of the fanatical Iman: he caused a *seventh* minaret to be added to the *Kaaba*, and then proceeded to the completion of his own magnificent work, in accordance with its original design.

This mosque cost a fabulous sum for its construction, and it has even been reckoned that each drachm-weight of stone in the building had cost three *asprés*! Whatever the precise total, it must have been very great. Its lofty dome rises majestically in the midst of several lesser ones, and surrounded by six superb minarets, each encircled by its graceful gallery as by a bracelet. It is faced by a court, surrounded by columns, with capitals of white and black, and having bases of bronze, supporting arches which form a quadruple range of cloisters to the portico; if one may apply the word “cloister” to a mosque. In the midst of this court, rises a richly-ornamented fountain, covered with a sort of cage of gilded trellis-work, doubtless to protect the purity of the water destined for religious ablutions.

The style of all the architecture is noble and pure, and recalls the grandest epoch of Arabian art; although the actual date of the structure goes back no farther than the beginning of the seventeenth century. A door of

bronze, reached by three steps, gives access to the interior of the mosque. The beholder is most impressed, at first sight, by the four colossal columns, or rather the four fluted towers, which support the massive weight of the principal dome. These pillars, with capitals carved in stalactite, are encircled, at mid-height, by a plain band, covered with inscriptions in Turkish letters. They have a character, altogether, of wonderful majesty, endurance, and power.

Verses of the Koran encircle, also, the cupolas and domes, and run along the cornices; a species of ornament, imitated from the Alhambra, and to which the Arabic writing lends itself charmingly, with its characters of veritable "arabesque," resembling those designs of surpassing richness, which are seen upon the genuine shawls of cachemere.

Key-stones, alternately black and white, adorn the summits of the arches; the *mirahb*, which indicates the direction of Mecca and contains the sacred book, is encrusted with lapis-lazuli, agate, and jasper; and it is said to contain also a fragment of the black stone of the Kaaba; a relic as precious for a Mussulman, as a fragment of the "True Cross" for a Catholic. It is in this mosque, also, that is preserved the Standard of the Prophet; which, like the Oriflamme of the ancient French monarchy, is never displayed, except upon occasions of the most supreme solemnity. Mahmoud caused it to be displayed, when, surrounded by the Imans, he announced to the prostrate multitude the decree of extermination against the janissaries.

A pulpit, surmounted by its conical sounding-board—the *mastaches*, or platforms raised upon pillars, whence the muezzins call the faithful to prayer—and the chandeliers, decorated with globes of crystal and ostrich eggs,

complete the decoration, which is of the same character in all the mosques. As in Saint-Sophia, beneath the side arches, are heaped boxes, trunks, and packages, placed there under the Divine protection.

Near the mosque is the turbé, or tomb, of Achmet himself; the glorious Padischa, who sleeps in his funeral chapel, beneath his coffin, which is covered with the most precious stuffs of India and Persia; having at his head his turban, with its jewelled aigrette, and at foot two gigantic tapers, like the masts of a ship for size. Thirty lesser coffins surround him, being those of his children and his favourite wives, who keep him company in death as in life. At the extremity of the turbé, stands a cabinet, gleaming with sabres, kandjars, and other arms, literally blazing with gems.

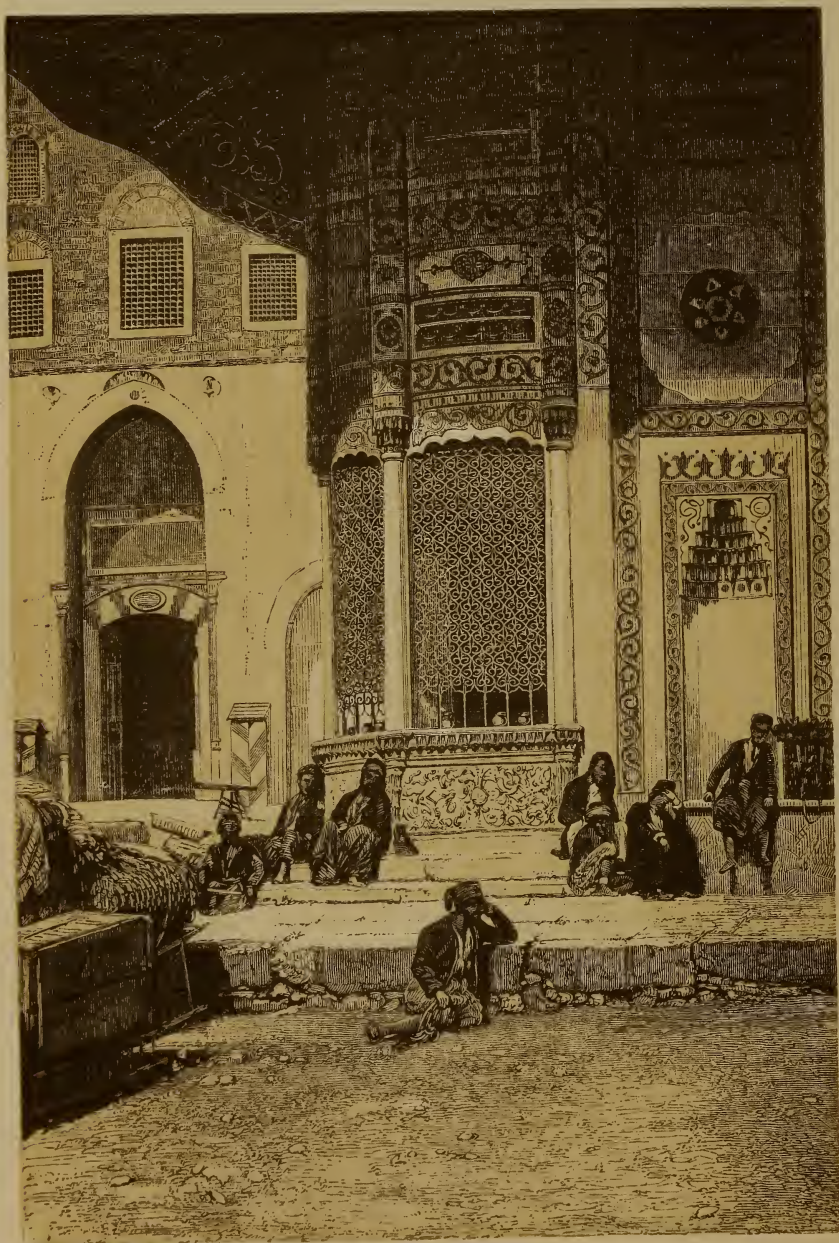
These detailed descriptions of the two most remarkable mosques, allow me to dispense with any description of the mosque of Sultan-Bayezid (Bajazet), which differs in no important particulars from the others; and those particulars, such as demand rather the pencil than the pen, for their illustration. One may remark, in the interior, some beautiful pillars of jasper and porphyry; and above the cloister which is attached to the mosque, hover perpetually clouds of pigeons, as familiarly as those in the Place of Saint-Mark at Venice. A worthy old Turk is always in attendance, beneath the arches, with a sack of grain, of which you buy a small measure, and scatter by handfuls upon the ground; when, in a moment, domes, pillars, minarets, and cornices, give forth myriads of pigeons, who precipitate themselves at your feet, almost brushing your face with their wings; and you find yourself in the midst of a whirlwind of plumage. In a few seconds, not a grain of corn remains upon the pavement, and the feathery cloud rises again to its

aërial position. This world of pigeons comes from a single pair, which the Sultan Bajazet purchased from a poor old woman who solicited his charity, and gave to the mosque. They have certainly multiplied amazingly; but, doubtless, their lives are sacred.

According to the custom of the founders of mosques, Bajazet has his turbé near to that to which he has given his name. He sleeps there, covered with a drapery of gold and silver, and having beneath the head—with an assumption of humility, rather Christian than Mahometan in character—a brick, made from the dust upon his garments and his shoes; for there is in the Koran, the following verse: “He who is soiled with dust in the paths of Allah, has nothing to fear from the fires of hell.”

We will extend no farther this review of mosques; which, as already remarked, greatly resemble each other, having only slight architectural variations.

It is well to mention the Suleimanieh, as one of the most perfect in its architecture; and near which stands the turbé, where reposes, beside Soliman I., the celebrated Roxalana, beneath a coffin covered with cache-meres. Not far from this mosque, is a sarcophagus of porphyry, said to be that of Constantine.



IMPERIAL GATE OF THE SERAGLIO.

XXIII.

THE SERAGLIO.

WHEN the Sultan is occupying one of his summer palaces, it is permitted to strangers, by means of a firman, to visit the Seraglio: but from this word, do not evoke any dreams of the Paradise of Mahomet.

“Seraglio” is, in fact, a generic word, signifying simply “*palace*,” and perfectly distinct from “*harem*,”—the habitation of the women,—with which it is commonly confounded, in the European mind. The harem forms certainly a part of the seraglio; but male strangers are never admitted there, under any circumstances; not even in the absence of its fair inhabitants.

To make a visit to the seraglio, it is usual to form a party of some ten or twelve persons; for the bestowal of numerous, and somewhat considerable gratuities, forms a necessary part of the process; and these amount to a total of from six pounds to eight pounds, which is neither augmented nor diminished, by any variation in the numbers of the party.

A dragoman employed for the “community,” precedes the visitors, and arranges all these matters with the guardians of the Enchanted Castle. He robs you, of course; but, as you cannot help yourself, it is as well to submit tranquilly. Here, as at the mosques, it is all-important to be provided, beforehand, with slippers; for if, in Europe,

we take off our hats, on entering any respectable place, in Turkey you take off your shoes: which latter process has, perhaps, the more significance of the two; because, in performing it, you, at least, leave at the threshold the dust of your feet.¹

The seraglio, or properly "*serai*," occupies, with its irregular buildings, that triangular piece of land, which is washed on one side by the waters of the Sea of Marmora, and on the other by those of the Golden-Horn. An embattled wall encloses its whole extent; which is very considerable. An embankment, paved with large flagstones, extends along the two sides which face the sea. The current dashes past, with startling rapidity; the blue waters boil and foam as if in a heated cauldron, and make millions of sparks to dance in the sun. Apart from this, the water is remarkably transparent, and renders plainly visible the green rocks or white sand at the bottom. Vessels cannot stem this current, except they be towed, or employ steam-power.

Above the walls,—which are mostly dilapidated and sunken, and made up of incongruous fragments of more ancient structures,—can be seen buildings with latticed windows; kiosks of a Chinese or rococo style; the cones of cypresses, and tufts of plane-trees.

Over the whole, hangs an air of solitude and abandonment; and it is hard to believe, that behind this dull and dingy wall is the luxurious abode of the glorious Kalif, the all-powerful Sovereign of Islam.

The entrance for visitors is through a gateway of very unpretending architecture, guarded by a few soldiers. Beneath this gateway, in superb cabinets of mahogany,

¹ Those who have visited any of the German "show-palaces," with their floors of inlaid and polished wood, will be aware, that the compulsory assumption of slippers is not restricted to the East.—TRANS.

are guns ranged in racks, in most admirable order and condition. This gate passed, our little band, preceded by an officer of the palace, a cawas and a dragoman, traversed a sort of garden, wild and uneven, planted with gigantic cypresses; a cemetery minus the tombs; and speedily reached the entrance of the apartments.

By direction of the dragoman, we here assumed our slippers, and began to ascend a wooden staircase, which certainly had nothing monumental about it. In our Northern countries, where (founded upon recollections of the "Arabian Nights") an exaggerated idea of Oriental magnificence obtains, the coldest spirits cannot but raise, in imagination, magical architecture; columns of lapis-lazuli, with capitals of gold and foliage of emeralds and rubies; and fountains of crystal sparkling with jets of living silver. But we confound (to begin with) the Turkish style with the Arabic, with which it has nothing in common; and we dream of Alhambras, where there are, in fact, but slight kiosks, and rooms of the simplest ornamentation.

The first room which we entered, was circular in form, pierced by numerous trellised windows, and surrounded by a divan in its whole extent. The walls and ceiling were adorned with gilding and arabesques; black curtains and a sloping cornice of carved work, completed the decoration. A very fine matting (which is doubtless superseded in winter by a luxurious Smyrna carpet) covered the floor. The second apartment was painted of a grayish tint, in "distemper," in the Italian mode. The third had, for decoration, landscapes, mirrors, blue curtains, and a mantel-clock with gilded face. Upon the walls of the fourth, are sentences traced by the hand of Mahmoud; who was an exquisite calligraphist, and, like all the Orientals, vain of that talent; a vanity quite com-

prehensible, because this writing, complicated by its curves, ligatures and interlacements, approaches closely to the art of drawing.

After traversing these rooms, we reached a smaller one.

Two sketches in crayon by Michel Bouquet, were the sole objects of art, that attracted the eye, throughout these apartments, in all of which reigned the severe nudity of Islamism. One of these sketches represented The Harbour of Bucharest, and the other, a View of Constantinople, from the Maiden's Tower ; without figures, be it well understood.

A mechanical clock displayed a view of the Seraglio-point, with caiques and vessels, set in motion by the machinery, and pitching about in a manner to excite the intense admiration of the worthy Turks, and the smiles of the irreverent Giaours, who scoff at everything ; for such a clock were more appropriately placed in the dining-room of a rich grocer, than in the mysterious abode of the Padischa. The same room, however, as if by way of compensation, contained a cabinet, the parted curtains of which gave to view a mass of workmanship in gold and jewels ; the true luxury of the Orient.

It was a treasure which had no need to envy that of the Tower of London. It is the custom for each Sultan to bequeath to this collection, some article which has been peculiarly in his personal use. The greater part have given arms, consisting of kandjars, with handles literally overlaid by diamonds and rubies ; sabres, in silver scabbards, carved in relief, and blue-veined blades covered with Arabic inscriptions, in letters of gold ; masses of arms, richly enamelled ; and pistols, of which the stocks had disappeared beneath clusters of pearls, corals and precious stones. But the Sultan Mahmoud, in his quality of cali-

graphist and poet, had bequeathed his writing-desk, inlaid with gold and covered with diamonds. By a sort of civilised coquetry, he had sought to blend *thought* with this mass of emblems of brute force; and to show that the brain has its power as well as the arm. In this cabinet is seen, also, a curious Turkish mantel-piece, made in honey-comb, like the stalactites which were pendant from the ceilings of the Alhambra.

Beyond, is a gallery where the odalisques play and take exercise, under the surveillance of the eunuchs, who exercise over the females much that sort of authority which an usher wields in the play-ground of a school. But the place was too sacred to be entered by the profane, even when the birds were no longer in the cage.

A little farther on, rise the cupolas, starred with large panes of green glass, which cover the imperial baths, adorned with columns of alabaster and slabs of marble; but which we had to content ourselves with admiring from the outside.

We resumed our shoes, at the door by which we had entered, and continued our visit. We came, presently, to a garden filled with flowers, framed, as it were, in compartments of wood, in the old French mode. Then we traversed courts, surrounded by a species of cloisters with Moorish arcades, containing the apartments of the *icoglans*, or pages of the seraglio; and reached a kiosk or pavilion, containing the library, which is entered by a flight of steps, with a marble balustrade, delicately carved.

The door of this library is a marvel. Never did the Arabic genius trace upon bronze so wonderful a maze of lines, angles, stars—blending, crossing, interlacing and entwining, in a labyrinth, at once complicated and mathematically precise. Only the daguerreotype, could retrace this fairy-like piece of workmanship. The workman, who

should conscientiously undertake to copy, with his pencil, these inextricable meanderings, would of necessity go mad in despair, after wasting half of a life upon the attempt.

In the interior, are ranged, in book-cases of cedar, Arabic manuscripts, with the edge turned toward the spectator; a disposition quite peculiar, which I had already remarked in the library of the Escorial, and which the Spaniards have, undoubtedly, borrowed from the Moors.

There, also, we were shown, upon a large roll of parchment, a sort of genealogical-tree, bearing, in oval medallions, the portraits of all the Sultans, executed in miniature, in water-colours. These portraits are said to be authentic originals; a thing somewhat hard to believe, for they are represented of one uniform type, with pale faces and black beards; and the costume is, throughout, that of the Turks of Molière and Racine, without distinction of age or period.

The library seen, we were introduced into a kiosk of Arabian architecture, approached by steps of marble; and in which shone, in all its splendour, the ancient Oriental magnificence, of which, as has been seen, the apartments previously visited had not exhibited the slightest trace.

The greater part of the apartment was occupied by a throne, in the form of a divan, or couch, with a canopy supported by hexagonal columns of gilded brass, sprinkled with garnets, amethysts, turquoises, topazes, emeralds, and other precious stones, *in the rough state*; for formerly the Turks did not cut their gems. Horse-tails hung at the four corners, from large golden balls surmounted by crescents. It were difficult to imagine anything richer, more elegant, or more truly regal, than this throne, made as a seat for the Kalifs.

The barbarians alone have the secret of this marvel-

lous goldsmiths' work ; and the art seems likely to be lost—one does not know why—in proportion as civilisation advances. Without falling into the monomania of an antiquary, one may declare, that the farther back the date of an architecture, a jewel, or a weapon, the more perfect is the taste, and the more exquisite the workmanship. Pre-occupied with the development of intellect, the modern world seems, in some respects, to have lost its accurate perceptions of grace and beauty.

Some rays of light, falling from a half-open window, made these carvings sparkle and drew fire from the gems. Some tiles, of Arabic workmanship, designed with admirable symmetry, decorated the base of the walls, as in the halls of the Alhambra at Granada ; in the ceiling, baguettes of silver-gilt, curiously carved, formed compartments and roses. In one corner, from out the shadow, shone a curious Turkish fire-place, made in the form of a niche, and destined to receive a brazier. A sort of conical dome, in carved brass, enamelled with most graceful Arabic designs, served for mantel-piece.

Facing the throne, was a window, ornamented with a massive grating of gilded bars. It was *outside* of this sort of wicket, that, in olden times, the foreign ambassadors waited, standing, while their humble communications were transmitted, by proper officers, to the Sublime Sultan, seated, with the immobility of an idol, on his dais of gold and jewels, between his two symbolical turbans. Hardly could the ambassadors see, through their grating, shining like fixed stars, the magnificent eyes of the unapproachable Padischa ; but this was quite enough for the Giaours ; only the shadow of the deity should, at most, be visible to the dogs of Christians !

The exterior is not less remarkable. A large projecting roof covers the edifice. Columns of marble, sustain

the carved and decorated arcades. A slab of verd-antique, charged with an Arabic inscription, forms the sill of the door, the lintel of which is very low ; purposely so, it is said, that even the haughtiest of the vassals of the Sultan must, perforce, stoop his crest in entering the presence of the Grand Seigneur ; a trick of etiquette, jesuitical enough, and as worthily as grotesquely evaded, by an envoy of Persia, who entered *backwards*, as one does in a Venetian gondola.

In the description of the Bairam, I spoke sufficiently of the portico under which that ceremony took place, and have no need to visit it again ; and I continue the description of my route at hazard, mentioning things as they present themselves to mind.

It were difficult to give an accurate account of the numerous buildings, of various styles and periods, erected without preconcert or effort at harmony of effect ; and following, each, the caprice or the necessity of the moment ; scattered, as they are, too, over a vast surface, with large intervals, and shaded, here and there, by cypresses, plane-trees and sycamores, of gigantic proportions.

From amid a tuft of trees, rises a fluted column with a Corinthian capital, producing a most charming effect, and to which is given the name of *Theodosius* ; but with how much accuracy, I cannot pretend to say. I refer to it, because the number of Byzantine ruins or monuments, at Constantinople, is very limited.

The ancient city has disappeared almost utterly ; the gorgeous palaces of the Greek dynasty, of Paleologus and Commenus, have vanished ; their columns of marble and of porphyry have served for the decoration of mosques, and their foundations, covered by the fragile rubbish of Mussulman constructions, are buried, little by little, beneath the ashes of ever-recurring fires. Some-

times, the curious visitor may encounter, built into some wall, a fragment of a broken statue, or a shattered column; but nothing retaining its original form. It is beneath the soil, that the remains of ancient Byzantium must be sought.

It is worthy of remark, however, as a striking indication of "progress," that in the court in front of the ancient church of Saint-Irene, now transformed into an arsenal, and which forms a part of the dependencies of the seraglio, the authorities have collected many relics of antiquity; heads and trunks of statues, bas-reliefs, inscriptions, and tombs; the rudiments, in fact, of a Byzantine museum, which may gradually become curious and valuable, by daily additions. Near the church, stand two or three sarcophagi of porphyry, covered with Greek crosses, and which have, doubtless, contained the remains of former emperors and empresses; but now, deprived of their lids, become reservoirs of the rain of heaven, and serve as baths to the birds of the air, who hover joyously about them.

The interior of Saint-Irene is stored with guns, swords, and pistols, of modern fabric, arranged with a military precision, that would do no discredit to any European museum of arms.

A collection of much higher interest to visitors, is, however, that of historic arms, preserved in one of the galleries.

There we saw the sabre of Mahomet II.—a short, straight blade, of blue Damascus steel, inscribed, in gold, with Arabic letters; an enamelled armlet of Tamerlane, and a battered sword, of iron, with cross-handle, once wielded by the renowned Scanderberg. In glass-cases, lie the keys of conquered cities—symbolic keys, ornamented, like jewelry, with inlayings of gold and silver.

Beneath the vestibule, are collected the kettles and the kettle-drums of the janissaries; those kettles, which, when turned bottom upwards, made the Sultan tremble and turn pale, even in the recesses of his harem; together with fascines of ancient halberds, old cannon, and singular antique culverins, recalling the Turkish mode of warfare before the reforms of Mahmoud; those reforms, so useful, doubtless, but so calamitous, in a picturesque sense.

The stables, over which we cast a passing glance, had nothing worthy of remark, and contained, at the moment, only some common horses; the Sultan always being followed by his favourite steeds. The Turks have not, however, the passion for horses, which distinguishes the Arabs; although fond of them, and possessing some noble specimens.

In the foregoing account, you have pretty much all that a stranger can see, or know, of the seraglio. No stranger-foot profanes the private retreats, the retired kiosks, of the Sultan. The seraglio, like all Mussulman dwellings, has its selamlick; and in the seraglio, as elsewhere, it is for the harem that are reserved the refinements of a voluptuous luxury;—the divans of cachemere, the carpets of Persia, vases of porcelain, cabinets of enamel, ceilings of cedar, fountains of marble, and columns of jasper. Throughout Turkey, indeed, the abode of the men is, as it were, the naked and bare vestibule of the abode of the females, for whom the mansion would seem to be constructed,—a mere guard-room, interposed between the internal life and the world without.

I much regretted that we were not allowed to penetrate into a marvellous hall of baths,—a veritable realised dream of the Orient,—of which Maxime Ducamp has given a splendid description; but, on this occasion, its keeper was less compliant, or had received fresh com-

mands. If the houris take vapour-baths in paradise, it must be in a hall, similar to his *bijou*, of Mussulman architecture and luxury.

Fatigued by this long circuit,—during which I had been shod, and unshod, and reshod, seven or eight times,—I issued from the seraglio, by the Augustan gate (*Bab-Hummayoun*); and, leaving my companions, went and seated myself on the bench outside a little café; whence, while eating some grapes of Scutari, I could contemplate, at leisure, this monumental gate-way, with its high Moorish arch, its four superb columns, its marble scroll, inscribed in letters of gold, and its two niches; in which are exposed the heads of decapitated state-criminals. Among other heads, there is still to be seen, upon a silver plate, that of Ali-Teppelleni (or Ali-Tebelen), the renowned Pasha of Janina, whose history has been so vividly recalled to European readers, in Dumas' wonderful romance of "*Monte-Christo*."

I examined, also, the beautiful fountain of Achmet III., at which I had glanced on my way to Saint-Sophia. This, and the fountain of Top-Hané, are by far the most remarkable in Constantinople, where there are so many others that are beautiful; and are unequalled specimens of the richest Oriental architecture, combined with the most gorgeous Oriental ornamentation.

XXIV.

PALACE OF THE BOSPHORUS.—MOSQUE OF MAHMOUD.—
THE DERVISH.

IN sailing upon the Bosphorus in a caique, after passing the Maiden's Tower, there becomes visible, opposite Scutari, an immense palace in course of construction, which bathes its white feet in the blue and rapid waters.

The exists in the East a superstition, sedulously encouraged by all architects, to the effect that no man dies, while the house which he is building remains unfinished; and the Sultans, in particular, take care always to have some palace in progress.

Forming a remarkable exception to the custom of the Turks,—which is to consecrate solid and precious materials to the use of the house of God, and to erect for the transitory habitation of man, only kiosks of wood scarcely more enduring than himself,—this palace is of marble, and built for immortality. It consists of a large centre building, and two wings. To say to what “order of architecture” it belongs, were difficult. It is not Greek, nor Roman, nor Gothic, nor Saracen, nor Arab, nor yet Turkish; but approaches, nearer than to any other, to that style which the Spaniards term *plateresco*; and which makes the façade of a building resemble a gigantic piece of goldsmith's-work,

in respect of the complicated luxury of its ornaments, and the exaggerated minuteness of its details.

Windows with open-work balconies, wreathed pilasters, and festooned frames, and the intermediate spaces crowded with sculpture and arabesques, recall the ancient Lombard style, and remind one of Venice; except that there is, between the palace Dario, or Cad' Oro, and that of the Sultan, the same difference as between the grand canal and the majestic Bosphorus.

This enormous structure of the marble of Marmora—of a bluish white, which the gloss of novelty makes look somewhat cold—produces a superb effect, standing between the azure of the sky and the azure of the sea; and this will be still more striking when the warm sun of Asia shall have softened and gilded the massive pile, with those glorious rays, which are there received direct, and at first-hand.

An architect would find much to criticise, in this hybrid front, where the styles of all periods and all countries form an order, as undeniably “composite” as it is original. But it may not be denied, that this multitude of flowers, of wreaths, and of foliage, carved with the fineness of jewelry, and in a precious material, has an aspect singularly rich and voluptuous to the eye.

It is a palace, which might be the work of an ornamentist, who was not an architect, and who spared neither the hand of labour, nor time, nor yet expense. Such as it is, it is far preferable to those everlasting stupid classic reproductions, so flat, silly, and wearying,—as monotonous in model as sages or soldiers; and I like much better these rich interlacing masses of foliage, with their fantastic elegance, than a triangular gable, or a horizontal attic, resting, in accordance with strict rule, upon ranges of spindle-shanked columns.

This fresh and elegant ignorance, or defiance, of rule and form, displayed upon so gigantic a scale, has its charm. It is probable that the bold constructors of our own cathedrals, were little wiser on the same subjects ; but their works are not the less admirable, for all that.

Along the whole extent of the palace runs a terrace, bordered, on the side toward the Bosphorus, with a line of columns, linked to each other by a railing or grating, beautifully wrought, and in which the iron curves and twines in a thousand arabesques and flowers, like the figures which a bold penman traces with free hand upon the paper. These gilded gratings form a balustrade of exceeding richness.

The two wings, constructed at a different time from the main body, are much less lofty, nor do they harmonise with the centre in style or form. Imagine a double range of Odeons and Chambers of Deputies in miniature, following each other in wearisome alternation, and presenting to the eye a long line of little columns, which seem to be of wood, although, in fact, of marble, and you will save me the necessity of description.

In passing and repassing, often, in front of this palace, I had frequently wished to visit it. In Italy, nothing would have been easier or more simple ; but to bring your boat to shore at an imperial landing-place, would be, in Turkey, a daring and intrusive act, and not unlikely to be followed by unpleasant consequences. Fortunately, however, a friend put me into communication with the architect, M. Balyan, a young Armenian of great intelligence, who speaks French fluently.

M. Balyan had the courtesy to take me to the spot in his own boat, propelled by three pairs of oars. He led me at once into an old kiosk, a remnant of the former palace, where we were served with pipes, coffee, and

sherbet ; and, subsequently, himself conducted me through the new apartments, with an attention and courtesy, for which I wish here to make my acknowledgments.

The interior of the palace was not yet completed ; but sufficiently advanced to give an admirable idea of the future splendour.

The religious notions of the Turks, necessarily deprive their ornamentation of innumerable subjects and resources, and sadly restrict the fancy of the artist, who is compelled to abstain, scrupulously, from blending with his arabesques the representation of any living thing. Thus there are no statues, no bas-reliefs, no griffins, no dolphins, birds, sphinxes, or butterflies ; no figures, half-woman, half-flower ; no heraldic monsters ;—in short, none of those creations which form the fabulous zoology of ornamentation, and of which, for instance, Raphael has made such splendid use in the galleries of the Vatican.

The Arabic style, with its undulating lines, its stucco-lace, its stalactite ceilings, and bee-hive niches, and its combinations of bright colours, tastefully enriched with gold, offers resources natural to the decoration of an Oriental palace ; but the Sultan, in the same spirit which makes us build Alhambras at Paris, chose to have a palace in modern taste. At first, one is surprised at his caprice ; but, on reflection, nothing can be more natural, if simply as an escape from monotonous harmony with all around him, and all previous models. M. Balyan, however, had need of a rare fertility of imagination, to decorate, in different styles, more than three hundred halls or apartments, with the restriction, above named, imposed upon his materials.

The general arrangement of the building is very simple. The rooms succeed each other in line, or open upon large corridors. The harem, among others, adopts the latter style of arrangement. The apartment of each

lady opens, by a single door, upon a vast hall or passage, as do the cells of the nuns in a convent. At each extremity of this passage, is an apartment for a guard of eunuchs or *bostangdis*.

From the threshold, I cast a glance over this retreat of pleasure, which, I repeat, resembles much more a convent or boarding-school, than one would be prepared to believe. There are hidden and extinguished, without ever shining upon the outer world, unknown and radiant stars of beauty ; but, perchance, each has won from the eye of the master, one glance of admiration : and that is sufficient ; that makes up their happiness !

The apartment of the Sultana-Validé, composed of lofty rooms, looking upon the Bosphorus, is remarkable for its ceilings, which are painted in fresco, with incomparable elegance and freshness. I know not who are the workmen, who have effected these marvels ; but Diaz could not find upon his palette, tones finer, more vague, more tender, or at the same time, more rich.

Now they are skies of turquoise, streaked with light clouds, that form depths of inconceivable profundity, in their intervals ; then, immense veils of lace of marvellous design ; next, a vast shell of pearl, irradiated with all the hues of the prism, or imaginary flowers hanging their leaves and tendrils through trellises of gold. Another chamber presents the same class of splendour. Here is a casket, the jewels of which are spread about in picturesque disorder ; necklaces, whose pearls have broken from their chain, and rolled forth like drops of hail ; while a perfect flood of diamonds, sapphires, and rubies, forms the basis of the decoration. Censers of gold, painted upon the cornices, send forth the blue or clouded smoke of their perfumes, and cover one ceiling with the varying tints of their transparent vapour ; in another, Phingari

bursts through the opening of a cloud, and displays the silver bow, so dear to the Moslem. Aurora tinges with blushes a morning sky; or, farther on, a piece of embroidery, glowing with light, shows its golden texture, confined by a clasp of carbuncles. Arabesques with countless interlacements, sculptured caskets, masses of jewels, wildernesses of flowers, vary these subjects in innumerable ways, utterly beyond the reach of description; and I despair of giving a sufficient clue to guide even the imagination of the reader through this gorgeous world of fairy magnificence.

The apartments of the Sultan himself, are in a Louis XIV. style, *Orientalised*, in which the intention to imitate the splendours of Versailles is evident. The doors, and the frames and sashes of the windows, are of cedar, of mahogany, or of violet-ebony, exquisitely carved, and protected by richly-gilded gratings or shutters. From those windows, spreads the most magnificent prospect that the world can offer; a panorama without rival, and such as never sovereign beside could behold extended before his palace.

The coast of Asia, where, relieved against a gigantic screen of dark cypresses, Scutari stands out, with its picturesque landing-place, crowded with vessels; its pink mansions; its white mosques, and graceful minarets; the Bosphorus, with its rapid and transparent waters, rippled in every direction by ships, steamers, feluccas, antique galleys from Ismid and Trebizond, caiques and boats of every form, above which hover the familiar clouds of mews, gulls, and albatrosses! Leaning forward, the eye catches, on both shores, the long lines of summer mansions, and of bright-coloured kiosks, which form, for that wonderful marine stream, a double quay of palaces. Add to this, the thousand accidents of light, the contrasted effects

of sun or moon, and you have a scene, which, taken in its various aspects, imagination itself cannot surpass, and hardly depict!

One of the peculiarities of this palace, is a large saloon, enclosed by a dome of red glass. When the sun streams through this dome of ruby, all things within blaze with strange light; the air seems to be on fire, and you almost imagine yourself breathing flame; the columns shine like lamps, the marble pavement reddens like a floor of lava, a fiery glow devours the walls, and the whole wears the aspect of the reception-hall of a palace of salamanders, built of metals in a state of fusion. The pictorial "hell" of a grand opera, or the glare of a mass of Bengal lights, can alone convey an idea of this strange effect; the taste of which may be questionable, perhaps, but which is, nevertheless, very striking.

A "gem" of the structure, and one which would not disgrace the loveliest architecture of the "Thousand-and-one-Nights," is the hall of baths of the Sultan. It is in Moresque style, built of veined Egyptian alabaster, and seems as if carved out of a single precious stone, with its colonnades, its pillars, with graceful over-hanging capitals; and its arch, starred with eyes of crystal, which sparkle like diamonds. What luxury, upon these transparent flags, shining like agate, to surrender one's frame to the delicious and skilful manipulations of the tellaks, surrounded, the while, by a cloud of perfumed vapour, and beneath a gentle rain of rose water and benzoin!

Tired of these marvels—fatigued with admiration, I thanked M. Balyan again and again, as he led me forth by the court of honour, the gate of which is a sort of triumphal arch, in white marble, richly ornamented, and which forms, on the land side, an entrance well worthy of this sumptuous palace.

Then, as I was dying of hunger, I made my way into a fruiterer's shop, and caused myself to be served with two spits of *kabobs*,¹ each enwrapped in a delicious pancake. This I moistened with a glass of sherbet, and so made a repast of a truly local character.

Issuing thence, I walked at hazard, trusting to chance for discovering some of those details, which escape you when you seek them. While amusing myself by regarding the shops of the confectioners, and of the makers of pipes, I reached the mosque of Sultan Mahmoud, near Top-Hané; one of those centres to which your feet lead you of themselves, when your thoughts are otherwise occupied. I adjusted my watch, at a kiosk filled with clocks and watches, such being the frequent neighbour of a mosque. This was a little pavilion, of much elegance, with high clear windows, through which you could read, upon a great variety of dials, almost as many varieties of time, in that sort of way, that you could choose any time you pleased, or which you thought the most probably correct.

These clocks gave the Turkish and the European time; the figures of which do not at all agree; the Orientals counting from the rising of the sun—a natural starting point, but one which varies constantly.

To these time-recording kiosks, is very generally attached a fountain, where hang cups and ladles of tin, which a keeper fills at the inner basin, and hands to those who ask to drink. These fountains are, almost all, pious endowments.

The mosque of Mahmoud is of modern style, and

¹ It is hard to say *how* to write this in English—*kébab*, or *kabob*—the true sound being something that resembles both, but is identical with neither.—TRANS.

different in arrangement from most edifices of its kind, of which Saint-Sophia is the proto-type. A single dome, encircled at its base by a coronet of windows and fluted brackets, rises amid four high façades, rounded at their summit, flanked at their angles, by pillars or buttresses, and surmounted by crescents, as is also the central dome. Its two minarets are deservedly renowned for their elegance. Picture to yourself, two lofty fluted columns, having for capitals each a projecting balcony, from the centre of which spring other and smaller columns, crowned also with light and elegant balconies, and supporting, in their turn, fascies of colonnettes, surmounted by a conical spire. They are very graceful, very bold, and very original.

Ordinarily, the turbé, or funeral chapel, of the founder, is placed near the mosque which he has built; but, contrary to this custom, the turbé of Mahmoud is, characteristically, placed in a special edifice, of a modern architecture, very slightly Orientalised, and in quite another quarter of Constantinople. The Sultan-reformer has, upon his coffin, instead of the classic and traditional turban, the innovating "fez" of the Nizam, starred with a superb agrafe of gems. There is also shown, to those who visit his tomb, a transcript of the Koran, made by this caligraphic prince, during the tedious leisure hours of the long captivity, which preceded his accession to the throne. Around the mosque are grouped cannon foundries, and parks of artillery; and there extends a terrace, bathed by the sea, and adorned, at either extremity, by a pretty pavilion.

Not far distant, one encounters the joyous tumult of the Great Square of Top-Hané, its charming fountain, and its mosque. Beneath the porch of this mosque, I

saw a figure which I shall never forget. It was the person of a dervish, couched upon the earth, near the fountain of ablutions. He had no clothing but a mere rag, of stuff made of camel's hair—a veritable “sack-cloth” for coarseness, and all soiled with the dust of the desert. This morsel of tatters was tied carelessly around his waist, and left, almost naked, a frame strong, bronzed, cooked, and recooked by the blaze of the sun, and the torrid breath of the *khamseen*. His legs, red as bricks, were shod to the ankle with a coating of gray dust. A vigorous leanness brought out all his muscles and bones; his hair, black and matted, bristled upon his head like locks of horse-hair; and upon his bronzed cheeks were scattered some tufts of a scanty beard, for he was young. An insane placidity reigned in his fixed eyes. Alone in the midst of the crowd, as if in the centre of Sahara, he seemed lulled by some apocalyptic vision. He made me think, involuntarily, of Saint John in the desert, and never did painter dream of such an one. It is impossible to imagine anything more wild, more savage, more haggard, or more ferociously ascetic; more thoroughly consumed by fanaticism, or wasted by fasts and macerations. Such a penitent might, indeed, fearlessly traverse the waste places of the earth, for the lions and panthers would shrink before that wild form, fed upon locusts.

He was a *hadji*, just returned from Mecca. He had seen the black stone, performed the seven sacred evolutions, and drank of the water of the well *Zem-Zem*, which washes away all sins; and, all naked as he lay, he would have regarded as little the rank and grandeur of a vizier, if placed within his reach, as he would a grain of the dust which clung to his feet.

XXV.

THE ATMEIDAN.

“THE Atmeïdan” (which lies behind the walls of the seraglio), is the ancient hippodrome. The Turkish word has precisely the same signification as the Greek; *i. e.*, arena for horses.

The Atmeïdan is a large, open space, bounded on one side, by the external wall of the mosque of Sultan Achmet, and, on the others, by ruins, or scattered buildings. In the central portion, rise the Obelisk of Theodosius, the Serpentine Column, and the Walled-pyramid; faint vestiges of those splendours, which, in other days, irradiated this superb circus.

These ruins are, however, nearly all that remain, on the surface, of the marvels of ancient Byzantium. The Augusteon, the Sigma, the Octagone, the Baths of Achilles and of Honorius, the Porticos of the Forum; all these are buried beneath that mantle of dust and forgetfulness, in which all dead cities are enwrapped. The work of time and decay has been accelerated, by the depredations of Barbarians, Latins, French, Turks, and even Greeks. Each successive invasion has worked its ravages. It is incomprehensible, this blind fury of destruction, and this stupid hatred of mere stones! And yet it must be natural to humanity, for the same thing has occurred at all epochs. It would seem as if a work

of art pained the eye of a barbarian, as day-light the eye of an owl. The light of intellect annoys him,—he knows not why,—and he extinguishes it. Religions, too, destroy with one hand, even if they construct with the other; and there have been many religions at Constantinople. Christianity destroyed the monuments of Paganism; Islamism, the monuments of Christianity; and, perhaps, the mosques are destined to fall before the progress of another change.

It must have been a gorgeous spectacle, when a crowd, blazing with gold and jewels, murmured and sparkled beneath the porticos that surrounded the hippodrome; and contended alternately for “The Greens,” or “The Blues;” those factions of charioteers, whose rivalry agitated the empire, and even caused seditions! The golden cars, drawn by horses of noble race, scattering, with rapid wheels, the powder of azure, or vermillion, with which the course was sprinkled; and the Emperor bending from the lofty terrace of his palace, to applaud his favourite colour! Conceive the scene!

The “Blues,” if one may adapt a modern phrase to the Byzantine epoch, were *Tories*, and the “Greens” were *Whigs*; for politics were mingled with these contests of the circus. The green faction actually attempted to create an emperor, and dethrone Justinian; and it required nothing less than the efforts of Belisarius and a powerful army, to quell the insurrection.

In the hippodrome, also, as in an open-air museum, were gathered the spoils of antiquity. A population of statues, sufficiently numerous to have peopled a city, thronged its circuit. The horses of Lysippus,—the statues of Augustus and other emperors, — Diana, Juno, Pallas, Hercules, Paris, Helen; all these celestial majesties, or superhuman beauties; all the high art of Greece

and Rome,—seemed to have sought here a final asylum. The horses of Corinthian brass, removed by the Venetians, paw the air, over the gate of Saint-Mark; the images of gods and goddesses, heroes and beauties, melted down by barbarians, are scattered abroad, in pieces of base coin!

The obelisk of Theodosius is the best preserved, of the three monuments which remain standing in the hippodrome. It consists of a quadrangular monolith, of rose-granite, sixty feet in height, by six in diameter at the base, gradually diminishing till it reaches a point at the summit. A single vertical line of hieroglyphics, sharply carved, marks each of its four faces. But, as I am not Champollion, I cannot translate for you the meaning of these mysterious emblems; doubtless, however, a dedication to some Pharaoh or other. But whence comes this gigantic block of stone? “From Heliopolis,” say the learned. But it does not appear to date back to the earliest Egyptian antiquity. It is, perhaps, only three thousand years old,—mere infancy for an obelisk! Thus its colour is almost perfect; the delicate rose tint, bearing but a few faint marks of gray.

The column does not stand immediately upon its pedestal; but is separated from it by four blocks of bronze. The marble pedestal is decorated with some rude and barbarous bas-reliefs, the subjects of which it is difficult to divine; seemingly, however, the triumphs, or deifications, of Theodosius and his family. The stiffness of the attitudes, the bad drawing and want of expression of the figures, and the crowding of personages, with an utter lack of perspective, characterise a period of decadence. The recollections of Greece are already lost, in these shapeless chiselings. Other bas-reliefs are half-buried, by the gradual rising of the earth; but enough

is visible, to show that they are representations of the means employed to raise the obelisk. [Strange resemblance,—the same sort of bas-reliefs appear upon the base of the obelisk of Luxor, placed in the Place de la Concorde, at Paris, by the ingenious Lebas!] Inscriptions, in Greek and Latin, state that the obelisk, lying upon the ground, was raised in thirty-two days, by Proclus, prefect of the prætor, in obedience to the commands of Theodosius; and to celebrate the virtues of that magnanimous emperor. Hence the bestowal of his name upon the monument. The Egyptian column, and the pedestal of the Lower Empire, harmonise well, and produce a fine effect; except that the obelisk is almost as fresh as if it had but just been hewn from the quarry, while the pedestal, the younger by fifteen hundred years, is greatly dilapidated and defaced.

Not far from this obelisk, writhes the “Serpentine Column,” made of three serpents, intertwined, mounting in spiral, like the grooves or flutings of a Solomonic column. The three heads of the serpents, crested with silver, have disappeared. There is a tradition, that Mahomet II., passing on horseback through the hippodrome, struck them off with one blow of his mace-of-arms, by one of those feats of prowess common to sultans. According to others, he cut off only one of the three heads with his sword, and the second and third were taken away for the value of the bronze;—a fact which is not incredible, when we remember the trouble taken, by the barbarians, to seek fragments of iron among the stones of the Colosseum. To destroy a palace, in order to find a nail, is quite characteristic of a savage.

This column, raised about nine feet above the ground, but the base of which is buried, seems insignificant in the midst of the vast surrounding space. A noble origin is,

however, attributed to it. According to the antiquaries, these intertwined serpents sustained, in the temple of Delphos, the golden tripod, vowed by admiring Greece to Phœbus-Apollo, after the victory of Plataea, gained over Xerxes. Constantine, it is said, caused the monument to be transported from Delphos to his new city. A tradition, less popular, but to me more probable, when the trivial artistic value of the monument is considered, is that it is merely a talisman, constructed by Appollonius of Thyana, as a charm against serpents. I leave the reader to choose between these two origins, as I could find no eye-witness to testify as to the time or purpose of its erection.¹

As to the Walled-pyramids of Constantine Porphyrogenetus, which used to be counted as a parallel to the Seven Wonders of the World, at a period when the most hyperbolical exaggerations cost nothing, it is no more than a block of masonry, a formless mass of stone, worn by the rain, eaten by the sun, filled with dust and cobwebs, severed by cracks, and threatening ruin on all sides; and has no longer the slightest significance in an artistic point of view.

This pile of masonry was formerly covered by large plates of gilded bronze, embossed with bas-reliefs, which, from the mere value of the metal, had excited the cupidity of depredators; and the pyramid of Constantine has been despoiled of its covering, until nothing remains but a blackened pile of stones of some eighty feet in height. This golden pyramid, which the panegyrists of the period compared, in importance, to the Colossus of Rhodes, must have made a splendid appearance, under the clear sky of Constantinople, and amid the noble monuments of

¹ It is remarkable, that the Greek priests have not affirmed it to be the identical "Brazen Serpent" reared in the wilderness by Moses. Were it in Spain, this would be done as a matter of course.—TRANS.

ancient art, surmounting the colonnades of the circus, crowded with sumptuously-clad spectators. But, to imagine what it then was, the fancy must go through a process of entire restoration.

Formerly, the Turks used this circus as an arena for racing their horses, and for practising the casting of the *djerid*, or javelin ; the ground being for centuries prepared for such uses. The "Reform," however, and the introduction of European tactics, have caused the abandonment of the javelin ;—a weapon better suited to the wild riders of the desert, than to regiments of regular cavalry, disciplined in the modern manner.

At the extremity of the Atmeidan is situated the *Et-Meiden* (meat-market)—a place memorable, and, despite the brilliant sun which floods it with light, gloomy and sinister.

If you observe yon half-decayed mosque, and those walls which still retain the marks of fire, you will readily perceive the traces of bullets. This ground, to-day white and dusty, has been wet and red with blood. It was in this Et-Meiden, that the celebrated and fearful massacre of the janissaries took place.

The late Sultan Mahmoud, feeling, with the instinct of genius, that his empire was tottering to its fall, believed that it might be saved by the introduction of arms and discipline like those of the Christian kingdoms ; and he caused his troops to be armed accordingly, and drilled by Egyptian officers familiar with European tactics. This just and simple reform aroused the indignation of the janissaries, and met their most resolute opposition. Their gray moustachios bristled with indignation ; the fanatics cried out against this sacrilege, invoking Allah and Mahomet the while ; and were inclined almost to regard the Commander of the Faithful as a Giaour, because of his ir-

religious folly in introducing diabolical manœuvres, of which Mahomet II. and Soliman I. had found no need, either to achieve or to retain their conquests.

Fortunately, Mahmoud was a man of firmness, and not easily intimidated. He had resolved to conquer or perish in this struggle; for the insolence of the janissaries, (equal to that of the prætorians, or the strelitz,) had become insupportable; and their perpetual seditions shook the throne, of which they claimed to be the main prop. In fact, they had long held the Sultans in awe, and often dictated the succession to the almost powerless throne.

The opportunity to bring the affair to a crisis was not long in coming. An Egyptian instructor struck a soldier, who was either insubordinate, or wilfully awkward; and the indignant janissaries espoused the cause of their comrade, overturned their kettles in sign of revolt, and threatened to fire the city, at its four corners;—these being (as we have remarked) their two especial modes of expressing discontent.

They assembled in front of the palace of Kosrew-Pasha, their aga; and demanded, with fearful cries, the heads of the Grand-Vizier and the Mufti, who had approved of the Sultan's impious "reforms."

But they had not to do with one of those enervated Sultans, who had so often been but too happy to appease their revolts, by throwing them a few heads of obnoxious ministers.

At news of the insurrection, Sultan Mahmoud hastened from Beschick-Tasch, where he was staying, assembled the troops who still remained faithful, convoked the ulemahs, and took from the mosque of Achmet, near the hippodrome, the Standard of the Prophet—never displayed except the empire be in danger;—and summoned all good Mussulmans to rally around the Commander of the

Faithful and Successor of Mahomet, in support of a holy war.

The abolition of the janissaries was decreed.

Meanwhile, the rebels had intrenched themselves in the Et-Meiden, near their barracks. The regular troops of Mahmoud occupied all the neighbouring streets, and planted cannon to command the market-place. The intrepid Sultan passed repeatedly, on horseback, before the ranks of the insurgents, braving a hundred deaths, and summoning them to disperse.

The "situation" continued. A moment's hesitation might ruin all.

A brave and devoted officer—Kara Dyehennem, by name—seeing the urgency of the crisis, had the boldness to precipitate its climax, by suddenly firing his pistol upon the priming of one of the cannon. The piece exploded, and the shot with which it was charged, opened a long lane of death in the ranks of the rebels. The action had begun. The artillery now thundered on all sides. A sustained fire poured like hail upon the crowded and confused masses of the janissaries, and the combat soon degenerated into a massacre. It was a literal butchery. No quarter was given. The barracks, where the fugitives sought to entrench themselves afresh, were set on fire, and those who escaped the sword perished in the flames.

Accounts differ enormously as to the number of persons slain. Some say six thousand; others twenty thousand, or even more; but from the previously-estimated numbers of the janissaries, it was probably between four and five thousand. The bodies not consumed by the fire, were thrown into the sea; and, for several months afterward, the fish, rendered semi-putrid by their banquet of human flesh, were unfit for food.

The vengeance of the Sultan (or, perhaps, of his over-

zealous subordinates) did not stop there. When you walk in the cemetery of Pera, or Scutari, you see innumerable decapitated monuments, standing still upright, with their carved turbans of marble at their feet. These are the tombs of former janissaries, whom even death had not placed beyond the reach of this expression of vengeance.

Was this terrible extermination wise, or otherwise, in a political point of view? Did not Mahmoud, in destroying this powerful body, extinguish one of the forces of the state; one of the main props of Turkish nationality? Has the modern progress effectively replaced the ancient barbaric energy? In the twilight which shadows the decline of empires, does the torch of reason yield a better light, than the blaze of fanaticism? It is still hard to say. But the events which the world is about to witness, will soon decide the question; and the policy of this great and fearful act of Mahmoud, can then be definitely judged by its results.¹

¹ Had our author written after the late gallant displays of Turkish military energy and skill, in their unaided contests with the Russians, he would have felt that, at least, the power of the nation was not sensibly weakened by the loss of the janissaries; and, apart from this, I think it but just to append to the censure of Mahmoud, implied by the tone of the narrative, the observation, that the world has long recognised the fact, that, in the struggle with the janissaries, the Sultan's life and throne were both at stake; and that the struggle was not of his provoking. That formidable and lawless corps, had long been the terror of successive Sultans,—raising and deposing them almost at pleasure; and indulging with impunity in every extreme of cruelty, extortion and license, at the expense of the people. It had become evident, that either the Sultan or the janissaries must fall, and they challenged their own doom by open revolt. This fact, alone, quite destroys all parallel between their case and that of the Mamelukes (so inhumanly murdered by Mehemet Ali), to which it has been sometimes likened.

Indeed, fearful as it was, it may be doubted, whether, under Eastern institutions and customs, anything less than such utter extermi-

But I have wandered, very far, from my humble vocation of mere literary daguerreotypist ; let us return to our narrative.

At some distance from the Atmeidan, in the midst of a spot strewn with the ashes of former fires, and at the back of a hillock, gapes, like a great black mouth, the entrance of a gigantic Byzantine cistern. The descent is by a wooden staircase.

The Turks call it *Ben-Bir-Dereck*, or the Thousand-and-one Columns, although there are, in fact, but two hundred and twenty-four pillars. These columns, of white marble, are surmounted by large capitals, of a barbarous Corinthian style, supporting arches, and forming numerous aisles with their ranges. They have a projection three or four feet from their base, which shows the height to which the water rose, and which formed their apparent base, when the reservoir was filled. The earth has been elevated by the accumulations of the dust of centuries, the crumbings of the roof, and *detritus* of all sorts ; and the cistern must formerly have been much deeper, than it now appears. There are some sculptures faintly discernible upon the capitals of the columns ;—Byzantine hieroglyphics, the meaning of which is unknown. An *Epsilon* and a *Phi*, which are often repeated, are rendered by these words : “ *Engel-Philoxena* ; ” signifying, that this cistern served for strangers. It was built by Constantine, whose monogram is apparent upon the large Roman bricks which form the arches, and on the shafts of many of the columns. At present, some Jews and Armenians have established a silk manufactory here.

nation would have effected its purpose ; and it has long been admitted, that, even if carried out to an inhumanly fierce extent, it was, in its essentials, an act of self-defence on the part of the Sultan ; and a rescuing of both the throne and the people of Turkey from a murderous, lawless, and most tyrannical domination.—TRANS.

Spinning-wheels and winders buzz beneath the arches of Constantine, and the noise of looms imitates the rippling of the waters which have disappeared. There reigns in this subterranean region—half lighted and half buried in profound shadow—an icy coldness, which chills the visitor; and it is with a lively sensation of pleasure, that he remounts, from the depths of this gulf, into the warm glow of the sunshine; pitying, sincerely, the poor work-people, patiently pursuing their tasks, like gnomes or kobolds in their cold and dreary cavern.

Not far from this cistern, in the rear of Saint-Sophia, there is another reservoir, called *Yeni-batan-Serai*, the Palace of the Mother Earth. This last, however, does not contain a silk factory, like Ben-Bir-Dereck. Near the entrance a humid and penetrating mist, charged with colds, coughs, and rheumatisms, enwraps you in its damp mantle. A vast dark expanse of water bathes the columns, green with moisture, and extends beneath the gloomy arches, to a distance which no eye can penetrate, and which the torches cannot illumine.

Nothing could be more grim and sombre. The Turks believe that djinns, ghouls, and afrites, hold their sabbath in these lugubrious regions; and there flap, joyously, their bat-like wings, damp with the drippings of the vault. Formerly, it was customary to navigate, in a boat, this subterranean sea; and the voyage must have strongly resembled the crossing of the infernal stream under the guardianship of Charon. Some boats, drawn, doubtless, by the action of unknown currents, towards some gulf, never returned from this dark journey, which is now, therefore, peremptorily interdicted; and which, even were it otherwise, I should not have had the slightest desire to undertake.

XXVI.

THE ELBICEI-ATIKA.

UPON the Atmeidan, in front of the mosque of Achmet, and near the Mecter-Hané (or depôt of tents), stands a rather handsome house, of Turkish style. It is the *Elbicei-Atika*; the museum of ancient Ottoman costumes.

This museum, recently opened to the public, has in front a court, where spreads a lovely carpet of verdure, and where sparkles the water of a fountain playing in a basin of marble. If there were not, at the door, a person to take the tickets of admission, the visitor might fancy himself in front of the *Konak* of some bey. Nothing can be more agreeably tranquil than the whole aspect of this retrospective *vestiarium* of the ancient Turkish Empire. The shade and silence of the past enwrap this calm asylum in their gentle cloud. In setting foot within the *Elbicei-Atika* one retrogrades from the present, and enters, in bodily presence, the realms of history.

Upon the staircase, as a sign or a sentinel, one encounters a *yenitcheri-kollouk-neferri*; in other words, a janissary of the body-guard. In the time of the power of the janissaries, no one passed in front of a post of that lawless body, without being more or less laid under contribution. It was imperative to throw something into the basin, or be insulted and beaten.

A figure, whose head and hands are of wood, carved

and coloured (not without skill), wears the dress of the ancient janissary. This infraction of the peremptory law of Mahomet, which prohibits all representation of the human figure, is very remarkable; and gives incontestable evidence of the weakening of religious prejudice, on one point at least; a result produced, doubtless, by contact with Christianity and civilisation. Such a museum as this, in which one sees nearly four hundred personages, had been an utter impossibility not long since, although, at present, it seems to shock no one; and, not unfrequently, some old janissary, who escaped the massacre, comes to indulge his reminiscences amid the costumes of his former companions-in-arms, and sigh over the remembrance of "the good old times" which have passed away for ever.

The wooden janissary has the air of a jolly swaggerer. A sort of ferocious *bonhomme* breathes in his marked features, heightened by a long moustache. He would evidently be capable of murdering facetiously; and his attitude expresses all the disdainful indifference of a privileged body, who considered, that, for them, everything was permitted. With his legs crossed one over the other, he plays upon the *louta*,—a sort of three-stringed guitar, —to charm the leisure of his friends. He wears a red tarbouch, around which is rolled, in the fashion of a turban, a piece of common cloth; a brown sort of cassock, the ends of which are covered by his sash; and large trousers of blue cloth. In his belt—at once arsenal and pocket—are heaped, or bristling, handkerchief, napkin, tobacco-pouch, poignard, yataghan, and pistols. This habit of cramming everything into the sash, is common among both Spaniards and Orientals; and I remember having seen, at Seville, a combat with knives, in which the only thing killed was a *melon* contained in the sash of one of the combatants!

Before the *yenitcheri* is placed a little table, covered with ancient Turkish money,—aspres, paras, and piastres, which have become rare,—showing the “black-mail” levied by the janissaries upon the “cockneys” of Constantinople. Near him are roasting, upon a girdle, some grains of maize; a food with which Eastern frugality contents itself. We passed without fear, because he was of wood; and we had, moreover, paid our ten piastres at the entrance.

Facing this janissary, stood some soldiers of the same body, in costumes very similar.

Passing the threshold, we found ourselves in an oblong apartment, dimly lighted, and filled with large glass-cases, containing figures dressed with scrupulous care and exactitude. This was the hall of Curtius,—the “Tussaud exhibition” of a world which has disappeared. There are collected, like the types of antediluvian animals, in the museums of natural history, the individuals and the races suppressed by the *coup d'état* of Mahmoud. There live again, in an existence dead and motionless, that fantastic and chimerical Turkey, of turbans like mounds of pastry; of dolmans trimmed with catskin; of high conical caps; of jackets with suns embroidered on the back; and of arms barbarously extravagant,—the Turkey of melodramas and fairy tales. Only twenty-seven years have glided away since the destruction of the janissaries, and it would seem to have been a century, all is so radically changed. By the resolute will of the reformer, the old national habits have been annihilated; and costumes, which have been really contemporary, have become historic antiquities.

In viewing, behind these glasses, those moustached or bearded visages, with fixed eyes and colours mocking the life, illuminated by a feeble and oblique light, one cannot

but experience a strange impression,—a sort of indefinable uneasiness.

This approach to reality, differing from the idealisation of art, disquiets, by the sort of illusion which it produces. In tracing the transition, from the statue to the life, you seem to have encountered a corpse. These fierce visages, but no muscle of which moves, remind one of those rouged and painted bodies of the dead, which, in some countries, are carried to the grave with uncovered faces.

These long files of strange-looking personages, maintaining eternally the stiff and constrained positions originally assigned to them, resemble those people, petrified by the vengeance of some sorcerer, of whom we read in Eastern fables. There is wanting only the white-bearded old man, sole survivor of the dead city, reading the Koran, while seated upon a stone bench beside the gate. He might be personated, perhaps, although rather prosaically, by the man who had demanded, at the door, the money for our tickets.

It is impossible, here, to describe, one by one, the hundred and forty figures enclosed in the glass cases of these two floors, between many of whom the difference is only some almost imperceptible variation of cut or colour in the costume. Such a detailed description has, however, been admirably given by M. George Nagnes, son of the editor of the French newspaper at Constantinople.

The Elbicei-Atika is composed, chiefly, of the former costumes of the household of the Grand Seigneur, and the different uniforms of the janissaries. There are, also, some figures of artizans, dressed in the old fashion ; but not many.

The chief functionary of a seraglio is naturally the master of the eunuchs—the kishlar-agassi. The specimen

of this dignitary, in the Albicei-Atika, is splendidly clad in a pelisse of brocade, embroidered with flowers and worn over a tunic of red silk, and enormous trousers, supported by a magnificent cachemere, doing duty as a sash. He wears a twisted turban of red muslin, and bootees of yellow morocco. The Grand Vizier (*Sadrizam*) wears a turban of singular form, entwined with a roll of muslin traversed by a band of gold. He has also a *Kerslu-kaftan* (robe of honour) of brocade, embroidered with flowers of red and green. From his sash of cachemere protrudes the richly-jewelled handle of his kandjar. The Sheik-ul-Islam, and the Capitan-Pasha, are very similarly dressed.

Hosts of other officials, in gorgeous and characteristic dresses, stand around in throngs. Perhaps, the most remarkable is the *tchameh-agassi*, or chief of the ushers, with his robe of gold tissue, his sash, fastened by a massive gold clasp and bristling with a whole arsenal of weapons, and his cap (also of gold) terminating in a crescent, of which one horn is in front and the other behind,—a fantastic head-dress, arousing reminiscences of the lunar Isis. This official, who mould not appear misplaced at the gate of the palace of Thebes or Memphis, carries in his hand a wand, with bifurcated handle, and, in form, much resembling a nilometer—another Egyptian association. This wand is the badge of his office.

One other remarkable figure is that of a man, in a robe of white silk fastened by a sash covered with plates of gold, and wearing a cap of the same material, which expands, at the top, into four curves or protuberances, like those of the *chapska* of a Polish lancer. This is a *dilciz*, or mute ;—one of those silent executioners of secret vengeance or justice, who pass around the necks of rebellious pashas the fatal silken cord, and at whose silent appearance, the cheek of the boldest was wont to turn pale.

After a long sequence of guards and officers, the series is closed by two dwarfs, fantastically accoutred. These little monsters are hardly two feet and a half in height, and are grotesquely hideous. No sovereign of the middle ages considered his court complete, without the presence of either dwarf or jester, to serve as a foil to his splendour and greatness ; and, in Turkey, the custom was not only honoured then, but is still maintained ;—as we have had occasion to observe.

The rest of the museum is furnished from the corps of janissaries, every variety of whose costume is here reproduced ; as if Sultan Mahmoud had not sought to annihilate them in the Et-Meiden.

But, before speaking of their costume, it will, perhaps, be more interesting to inquire into their organisation.

The *yenitcheri*, or “ new troop,” was formed by Amurath IV., with the object of surrounding himself by a chosen body-guard, upon whose devotion he could rely. The nucleus was formed of his slaves ; and to these were added, subsequently, prisoners of war and recruits. Their name, *yenitcheri*, has been corrupted by Europeans into *yanissary*, or *janissary*,—which sound has the defect, however, of forming another word in Turkish, which signifies “ keepers of the gate ;” and has thus been supposed to express the original function of this body.

The *orta*, or corps, was divided into *odas*, or messes ; and the different officers assumed culinary titles, laughable enough at first hearing, but thus explainable. The soup-maker, the cook, the scullion, the water-bearer, seem strange military designations ; but they grew to have far more of the terrible than the absurd in their associations. To harmonise with this culinary hierarchy, each *oda*, in addition to its standard, had for ensign a *kettle*, marked with the number of the regiment. While in re-

volt, they reversed their kettles ; a process which came to make the Sultan tremble in the recesses of his palace ; for this respectable body did not always content themselves with a few heads to boil in their kettles, but occasionally insisted upon a revolution, and a change of sovereign.

Having enormous pay, being well fed, and strong in privileges, conceded or extorted, the janissaries, at length, formed a nation within the nation,—an *imperium in imperio* ; and their aga was one of the most powerful personages of the empire. The aga whose effigy is exhibited at the Elbicei-Atika, is dressed and armed in the most gorgeous manner, but the style of his costume is the same as has been already described. Beside him, stands the *sauton*,—hermit or devotee,—who was the patron of the corps, and named *Bektack-Emin-Baba*. He blessed the orta at its formation, and his memory was always held in high veneration. They invoked his name in battle, in danger, and in all times of emergency.

Without attempting to describe the various costumes of the janissaries, which were all founded upon the Turkish dress of the period, one cannot but bestow a word upon the singularities of habilement of some of their officers. The chief scullion—a grade equivalent to lieutenant—wore upon his shoulder a gigantic ladle, as the badge of his rank !—a ladle which might have been stolen from the kitchen-dresser of Gargantua. This strange decoration terminated, however, in a lance-blade ; doubtless to associate the idea of war with that of cookery. Other officers, bore gridirons, spiders, saucepans, and almost every variety of utensil, made more or less military by modification of form, but all retaining the original features with unmistakeable distinctness. But to describe the dress of “ the candle-lighter,” the “ bearer of the cat-o’-nine-tails,” the man with the “ wooden-bowl,” and

another with a stove for a turban, would take too much space.

We may just glance at the *kombaradji* (bombardiers), forming part of the corps founded by Ahmed-Pasha, Count of Bonneval; a celebrated renegade, and one of the soldiers of the Nizam-djedid, instituted by the Sultan Selim, to counterbalance the influence of the janissaries.

It is from this body, formed of the remains of the soldiers of St. Jean d'Acre, that may be traced the introduction of a uniform among the Ottoman troops. The dress of the Nizam-djedid, is very like that of the Zouaves and Spahis of the French army of Africa.

A few specimens of Greeks, of Armenians, and of Arnaouts, complete the collection.

In wandering through the Elbicei-Atika, before these cabinets peopled with phantoms of a past time, it is impossible to avoid a feeling of melancholy; and one asks, involuntarily, whether it may not be by an unconscious prescience, that the Turks have been led to form this conservatory of their ancient nationality, so formidably menaced by the events of the present day. Those events would seem, to a sombre imagination, to impart almost a prophetic significance, to this anxiety to gather together the peculiarities and reminiscences of the ancient Ottoman Empire of Europe, now in danger of being driven back upon Asia, as its last asylum.

Let us hope, however, that it is only the antiquated usages and habits of that period, symbolised by its costume, which, having become unfitted for the associations of progress and civilisation, are destined to be thrown aside, or preserved only as curious objects of reference or reminiscence; while the nation itself shall gain, in intelligence and freedom of action, by the change.

XXVII.

KADI-KEUI.

AN excursion to Kadi-Keui, is a pleasure which the inhabitants of Pera rarely refuse themselves on holidays ; especially those who are not rich enough to own a country house on the Bosphorus, among the summer palaces of the beys and pashas.

Kadi-Keui—"village of judges"—is a little town on the coast of Asia, opposite the seraglio, and in that locality where the Sea of Marmora begins to narrow itself to form the entrance of the Bosphorus. Upon its site stood, in ancient times, the town of Chalcedon, or Chalcedonia, built by Archias, under the Megarians, about the time of the twenty-third Olympiad, 685 years before Christ ; a tolerably respectable antiquity. Others, however, attribute the founding of Chalcedon, to a son of the soothsayer Calchas, at the time of the return from the Trojan war ; and others, again, to colonists from Calchis in Eubœa, who gave the town the name of the City of the Blind, in contempt of those who selected its site, when they could have chosen that on which Byzantium afterwards rose. This reproach does not, however, at this day, seem so very just ; for Kadi-Keui enjoys one of the most admirable prospects in the world, and Constantinople displays, upon the opposite shore, the magnificence of its domes, its minarets, and

its masses of many-coloured houses, intermingled with tufts of foliage. When one wishes to enjoy the panorama at Cologne, he must take his lodging at Deutz, on the other side of the Rhine; and to see Stamboul to advantage, there is no better course than to go and take a cup of coffee at Kadi-Keui.

Two modes of transport are available for this little journey: first the caique, then the steamer, which smokes near the wooden bridge of Galata. As the crossing is rather long, and the current rapid, the preference is generally given to the steamer. I have tried both. The steamer is more amusing for the traveller, inasmuch as it presents to him, crowded into a small space, so many specimens of humanity. The separation of the sexes forms so essential an integral part of the manners and thoughts of the people, that the quarter-deck of the steamers is reserved for the women, and forms a sort of harem, within which the Turkish females are confined. The Armenian and Greek women, when they are alone, take the same place. The whole deck is covered with low stools, upon which the passengers sit, with their knees in their mouths. Boys buzz about, carrying glasses of water or of raki, chibouques and cups of coffee, sweetmeats, or pastry; for, at Constantinople, one is always munching something; and grave functionaries stop at the corner of a street to buy and eat a slice of *baklava*, or *pastaka*, whenever appetite suggests such a proceeding.

At the stern of the boat, were five or six Turkish women, under the care of an old woman and a negress. Their yachmacks, of muslin, were transparent enough to render visible regular and delicate features, and, through the openings, wildly sparkled great black eyes, with heavy eyebrows, joined by the *sarmeh*. The nose seemed aquiline; and the chin, depressed perpetually by its bandages,

seemed to retract somewhat. The fault of Turkish beauties, when they are unveiled, is, that the portion of the face about the eyes, is of a much darker tint than any other part of the countenance.

“But how do you know this?” the reader is about to say, no doubt; scenting some gallant adventure, that I have failed to recount. But my knowledge has been attained, in a manner the least Don Juanish in the world. In wandering in the cemeteries, it has frequently happened to me to surprise, involuntarily, some lady adjusting her yachmack, or having left it open on account of the heat, trusting, for security, to the solitude of the place. That is “the whole story.”

Those women (on board the steamer), who seemed to belong to the middle class of society, wore feredgés of light, transparent colours, and exceedingly clean; and their limbs, polished by the use of the Eastern bath, shone like marble, between their little pantalettes of silk and their morocco boots. Those same limbs were generally rather stout; for one must not seek, in Turkey, the slender and graceful extremities of the Arab race. One of these women was nursing an infant; and it was amusing, to a European, to see the anxious fastidiousness with which she kept her face covered, while seeming perfectly indifferent to the exposure of her whole throat and bosom, caused by the playful antics of the infant.

Near this Moslem group, were seated three beautiful Greek girls, with their hair most gracefully dressed, after the manner of their nation,—parted in wavy bands, as in an antique statue, and flowing over their temples on each side; these bands being encircled by a large braid of hair, forming a sort of diadem. This braid is not always real; and some old ladies carry their indifference to that fact so far, as to wear it of a different colour from

that of their own hair. A good dame, not far from these beauties, displayed, above some dark bands of hair intertwined with black cord, a large tress of brilliant blonde, which never could lay the slightest pretension to having taken root in her head.

The ancient costumes disappear everywhere ; and thus the three young Greeks were dressed in European style ; but their *coiffure*, and a jacket of embroidered silk, gave them an air sufficiently picturesque. Their chiseled features showed that the Grecian models, now become classic, were but simple copies from Nature. Man can really invent, or imagine, scarcely anything ; not even a monster. It is easy to find, among the girls of Æleusis and Mægara, the living models of Phidias, Praxiteles, and Lysippus. These three girls were sufficiently perfect in form, to remind one of the virgin triad of the Graces.

During the crossing, everybody smoked ; and a thousand blue spirals of vapour rose, to join the dark column of smoke from the funnel. The boat, over-loaded on her deck, lurched fearfully ; and, had the “voyage” been ten minutes longer, there would certainly have been some cases of sea-sickness, although the water was as smooth as glass.

At length, however, the *Bangor* (such was the name of this great wooden shoe), ranged alongside the jetty, scattering a whole flotilla of caiques ; and we set foot on land.

What may be called the harbour of Kadi-Keuï,—if the word is not too ambitious,—is bordered with cafés of Turkish, Greek, and Armenian ownership ; always full of a motley crowd. The Perotes and Greeks drink great glasses of water, whitened with raki ; the Moslemah swallow little cups of muddy coffee ; and Greeks, Turks, and

Perotes, without distinction, make the rose-water bubble in the narghilé, while the polyglot cry, of "some fire," uttered in three or four languages, forms the running accompaniment of the conversation.

It is very charming, to sit here and admire the prospect, under the dreamy influence of the pipe; but it was not for that, that I had come to Kadi-Keui.

I had been invited to breakfast, by Ludovic, the Armenian, in whose shop I had bought some Persian slippers, some tobacco-boxes from Lebanon, and some scarfs of silk of Broussa, inwoven with gold and silver; together with some few other of those Oriental knick-knacks, without which no traveller dare present himself in Paris, on his return from the East.

Ludovic has one of the finest shops of curiosities in the whole Bezestín; and I have spoken of it, in detail, some chapters since. He has, also, at Kadi-Keui, a charming habitation. Like the merchants of "the City," those of Constantinople pass the day at their shops or warehouses, and retire, every evening, to some villa or cottage, to enjoy their domestic life; leaving all idea of business behind them, as they cross the threshold.

I followed the chief street of Kadi-Keui to its termination, according to instructions previously received. It is picturesque enough, with its coloured houses, projecting balconies, and overhanging floors. Some white fronts interrupt, here and there, the chequer of Armenian and Turk, and produce no bad effect. Upon the door-steps of many houses, were seated, or grouped, beautiful young women, who did not fly as you gazed; Turkish cavaliers passed along on horseback; Greek *papas*, in their violet robes, marched gravely by, caressing their venerable beards;—animation reigned everywhere.

The chief street once passed, the houses became less frequent, and were surrounded with larger gardens.

After a few minutes' walk, I perceived a white door, with stripes of blue. It was the door of Ludovic's house. I entered, and was welcomed by a charming woman, with large black eyes, and bearing, in her young face, the features of the Armenian race;—one of the finest in the world, and almost preferable to the Greek, if the aquiline of the nose did not incline to become a little too much exaggerated, with the approach of age.

Madame Ludovic spoke only her mother-tongue; and our conversation, necessarily, came to a stand, after the first salutations. I know nothing more vexatious than such a situation. I felt myself the greatest fool in the world, not to know Armenian; although one *may*, without suffering from an education very much neglected, be ignorant of that dialect.

With a movement of feminine tact, however, Madame Ludovic relieved my embarrassment, by leading me into a room where some lovely children were at play.

Really, now that communication between all countries is so universal and so prompt, mankind should adopt a universal language, in which every one could be understood; for it is a shame, that two human beings should stand, facing each other, reduced to the condition—for all purposes of communication—of deaf-mutes. The ancient curse of Babel ought to be revoked, in the world of modern civilisation.

The arrival of Ludovic, who speaks French fluently, restored to me the use of any tongue; and, before breakfasting, he showed me his house.

It is impossible to conceive anything more fresh, or more charmingly simple. The ceilings and walls of the rooms were painted in pale, delicate colours, relieved by

white bands ; fine Indian mats, replaced in winter by carpets of Ispahan or Smyrna, covered the floors. Divans of antique Turkish stuffs, and ottomans of morocco leather, tempted indolence in every corner. Some small tables, inlaid with pearl, and serving to support plates of confitures and vases of sherbet, completed the furniture.

As it was very warm, we breakfasted in the open air, under a sort of portico, facing a garden planted with vines, figs, and melons. Our repast consisted of fish, of a peculiar kind, fried in oil (the fish are called "Constantinople scorpions"), mutton-cutlets, cucumbers with hashed meat, and little cakes with honey ; the whole moistened with Greek wine of two sorts, one like Muscat, the other rendered bitter by an infusion of fir-cones,—a reminiscence of antiquity.

The dishes were brought by a little serving-maid of some fourteen years old, who, in her haste, made a glorious clattering upon the gravel of the pathways, with the great wooden shoes, into which she had stuck her little, naked feet ; and our cook was a big Armenian, with a rubicund visage and a beak like a parrot.

The breakfast finished, we went to take coffee and smoke a pipe, beneath the great trees which border the shore of the bay. Some musicians were performing an indescribable air, which begun by distressing, but, at length, in a manner fascinated you. Their orchestra consisted of a rebeck, a flute, and a tarbouka.

When we had heard enough of the singing, the fancy took us to go and see the performance given by some Armenian and Turkish buffoons, at Moda-Bournou, close to Kadi-Kewi. The subject of their performance was a mysterious beauty, a sort of Princess Boudroulboudour, whose veiled charms, betrayed by the indiscretion of her servants, made fearful ravages among the people. The

primitive theatre contented itself with slight decorations. Thespis played in a cart; the great plays of Shakspeare demanded no other scenic aid than a screen, bearing, in turn, the inscriptions "castle," "forest," "apartment," "field of battle," etc., etc., according to the requirements of the text. And at Moda-Bournou, the theatre consisted of an area of beaten ground, shaded by trees, and covered with carpet; the spectators sitting Turk-fashion, and there being a kind of open shed for the females. No scenes, no wings, no curtain, no railing.

A tent of canvas, to imaginative spectators, portrayed a harem. A young rogue, with his face enwrapped in a yachmack and his person smothered in veils, like a Turkish woman, proceeded to enclose himself in this harem, affecting languishing and amorous attitudes, and imitating that goose-like waddle, which their obesity renders but too habitual to the Turkish belles. This entrance produced roars of laughter, and deservedly, for it was comically perfect.

When the beauty had taken her place in her habitation, the sighing lovers came in a crowd to twang the *guzla* beneath her windows, from which her head leaned; occasionally showing two stupendous eyebrows, brilliantly charcoaled, and two superb spots of rouge beneath her eyes. The slaves of the house, armed with cudgels, made frequent sorties, and pummeled the suitors, to the intense jubilation of the audience.

It was not the lady who responded to the lovers, but a little old man, mummified and broken-down, and with his face surrounded by a little stumpy white beard. This grotesque creature, hidden behind the canvas, sang, in falsetto, at an amazingly shrill pitch, tender airs, in imitation of the voice of a woman.

At sound of these shrill whinings, the suitors were over-

whelmed with delight, and fancied themselves enjoying the music of Paradise. They made, through the agency of the young lady herself (closely veiled), the most passionate declarations to this atrocious old animal. The audience, being in the secret, amuse themselves by laughing at the contrast, between the words of love and admiration and the person to whom they are, in reality, addressed.

The Turkish, to those who understand it, lends itself, more than almost any other language, to conundrums, puns, and equivoques. A very slight alteration suffices to change the sense of a word, and turn it into absurdity or something worse; and this is a facility, of which the comedians no more neglect to take advantage, than do the exhibitors of our old friend Karagheuz.

To return to the "play."

Two or three of the unsuccessful lovers lose what little brains they may have had, and are "struck comical," each in his own particular way. One, continually bobs his head forward and back, like those wooden birds which are fixed to a table and moved by the swinging of a ball, by way of pendulum. Another, to every question addressed to him, responds by a caper and an unvarying exclamation, of *bim, boum, bim, boum, paff!* A third, carries a lantern, hung on the end of an iron-rod fastened to his turban, and pokes this appendage into every possible place where it is *not* wanted; earning, in return, an inconceivable amount of whacks, kicks, and tumbles.

At length appears the *tchelebi*, the *Almaviva*, the tenor, the conqueror; he who has only to show himself, to captivate any beauty. He gives to the other pretenders a general clearance. Nourmahal blushes, trembles, partly opens her veil, and answers (this time herself) with a fine gruff voice. The music becomes excited, and the young Greeks, dressed like females, advance, and enact a

sort of pantomime expressive of nuptial rejoicings. The beauty has evidently surrendered at discretion.

Such, at least, is the interpretation which it appeared to bear, following the gestures of the actors, and the seeming movement of the piece; although it is certainly possible, that I may have deceived myself, as entirely as did a certain amateur, who mistook, for a sacred oratorio, a pastoral symphony, which he happened to hear performed; and received for penitential sighs, that movement of the music which the composer had intended should express the chirping of the quails among the corn!

XXVIII.

MOUNT BOUGOURLOU.—THE ISLES OF PRINCES.

THE farce being finished, I hired a talika, in order to visit Mount Bougourlou, which rises, at some distance from Kadi-Keuï, a little behind Scutari; and from the height of which the spectator enjoys an admirable panoramic view of the Bosphorus and the Sea of Marmora.

The Turks, although they have, properly speaking, “no art,” because the Koran condemns, as idolatry, all representation of animated beings, have, nevertheless, in a high degree, the sense of the picturesque. Wherever there is, in any locality, a fine vista, or a smiling perspective, there is sure to be, also, a kiosk or a fountain, and some Osmanlis enjoying *kief* upon their outspread carpets. They will remain thus for entire hours, in perfect immobility, fixing their dreamy gaze upon the distance, and allowing, from time to time, a fleecy cloud of smoke to escape lazily from their parted lips.

Mount Bougourlou is frequented, chiefly, by the women, who pass their days under the trees, in little companies, or by harems; watching their children at play, chatting among themselves, drinking sherbet, or listening to the strains of itinerant musicians.

My talika, drawn by a stout horse, which the conductor led by the bridle, followed a path which ran close to the sea, whose waters frequently dashed against the

wheels as we passed. We left behind us the houses of Kadi-Keui, crossed the large open space of Hyder-Pasha, (whence, by the way, depart, every year, the numerous caravans of pilgrims bound for Mecca), traversed the immense cypress grove of the cemetery behind Scutari, and began to climb the steep ascents of Mount Bougourlou, by a road ploughed with ruts, bristling with fragments of rock, obstructed, frequently, by roots of trees, and narrowed by the projection of houses into the highway. For, it must be avowed, that the Turks have the most profound indifference, as to the passability of their roads. Two hundred carriages will, in one day, turn out of the road, to drive around a large stone lying in its midst, without any one of the drivers forming the least idea of taking the slight trouble of removing the obstacle. Despite, however, the obstructions and the forced deliberation of the drive, it presents an agreeable and animated scene.

The carriages follow and meet each other: arabas, with the measured step of their oxen, drawing parties of six or eight females; talikas, containing four, seated facing each other, with legs crossed upon their carpets; all richly dressed, and their heads starred with diamonds and jewels, which sparkle through the thin muslin of their veils.

Sometimes there passes, in a modern "brougham," the favourite of some pasha; and, although the thing is easily understood, it has a very droll effect, to see, at the window of one of these broughams, instead of the well-known face of some young lady, who always drives in the park without an escort, the muslin countenance of a lady of the harem, enwrapped in her Oriental draperies, and veiled to the eyes. The difference is so remarkable, that it almost jars upon the sense like a discord.

There are, also, plenty of cavaliers and of pedestrians,

who climb, more or less rapidly, the abrupt ascent of the hill, following its numerous windings and zig-zags.

On a sort of table-land, or plateau, mid-way the ascent, and beyond which the horses cannot mount, stand a large number of carriages, waiting for their owners; specimens of Turkish vehicular taste at all epochs, and forming a medley, excessively picturesque and *bizarre*. I caused my *talika* to take up a position in which I could, with certainty, find it on my return, and continued my way on foot. Here and there, on the level spots which occasionally break the ascent, and form a species of terrace, were seated, in the shade, an Armenian or Turkish family, recognisable by their bootees of yellow or black, and their faces more or less scrupulously veiled. (When I say "family," it must be clearly understood, however, that I speak of women only. The men form separate parties, and never accompany the females.)

Upon the summit of the mountain, were installed several *cawadjis* (coffee-makers), with their portable furnaces, vendors of water and sherbet, and dealers in pastry and confectionary,—the invariable accompaniment of every Turkish party of pleasure. A very gay spectacle is presented to the eye, by these females,—clad in pink, green, blue, lilac,—scattered among the grass like flowers, and enjoying the fresh air and light, beneath the shade of the sycamores and plane-trees; for, although the weather was oppressively hot, the elevation of this spot, and the play of the sea-breeze, diffused there a delicious and refreshing temperature.

Some Greek girls, crowned with their diadems of braided hair, had taken each other by the hand, and, moving to a sweet and gentle air, resembled, beneath that bright sky, the "Train of the Hours," in the celebrated fresco of Guido.

The Turks regarded them with silent contempt; evidently quite unable to conceive that people should resort to motion as a source of amusement, and still less, that they could make such a violent exertion as is involved in dancing.

I continued my course, until I reached a clump of trees, which crowned the mountain like a giant plume, and whence one commands the whole course of the Bosphorus, and beholds the Sea of Marmora, dotted with the Isles of Princes; a radiant and marvellous spectacle. Seen from this height, the Bosphorus, here and there shining at intervals between its banks of brown, resembles a succession of lakes. The curves of the cliffs and promontories, which project into the water, seem to contract, or even to close it up, from point to point. The undulations of the hills, upon the borders of this marine stream, have an unsurpassed gentleness of profile. The wavy line which is traced by the recumbent form of a lovely woman, has not a grace more softly voluptuous.

A silvery light, clear and tender, bathes, in its vague transparency, this extended landscape. In the west, Constantinople, with its net-work of minarets, on the shore of Europe; toward the east, a vast plain, intersected by a road leading to the heart of Asia; in the north, the embouchure of the Black Sea, and the Cimmerian regions; in the south, Olympus, Bithynia, and the Troad; and beyond, if the mind's eye can pierce the distant horizon, Greece, and her sea-dotted Archipelago.

But that which most attracted my regards, was that vast plain, naked and desert, stretching away towards the mysterious depths of Asia, and over which my imagination followed in the train of caravans, dreaming of strange adventures and exciting incidents.

After half an hour of silent contemplation, I de-

scended to the level occupied by the groups of smokers, women, and children.

A large circle had been formed around a band of Zigani, who were playing upon the violin, and chanting ballads in a strange dialect. Their complexions of russet leather, their long blue-black hair, wild and exotic air, savage movements, and picturesquely ragged habiliments, reminded me of the poem of Lenau, "The Bohemians among the Heather," four stanzas of which will infect any man with a desire for the unknown and strange, and the most ferocious longing for an errant life.

Whence comes this inextinguishable race, of which identical specimens are found in every corner of the world, among the numerous populations amid whom they move, and yet with whom they never blend? From India, no doubt. Some tribe of Pariahs, who would not submit to their abject hereditary condition.

I have rarely seen an encampment of Bohemians, without having the desire to join them and share their vagabond existence. The savage nature still exists, beneath the skin of the civilised man; and it needs but a slight touch of circumstance, to awaken the secret desire of escaping the restraint of laws and conventionalities. It is true, that after sleeping for a week beneath the beautiful stars, beside a cart, and enjoying cookery in the open air, one begins to miss his slippers, his easy chair, his curtained feather-bed, and, above all, his cutlets, moistened with grape juice that has made the Indian voyage—or even the latest edition of the evening paper; but the sentiment that I have expressed, does not the less really exist.

I found my talika and its driver where I had left them, and the descent commenced; an operation sufficiently disagreeable, considering the rudeness of the declivity and

the state of the road ; which last much resembles a staircase, in ruins throughout, and in some places entirely demolished, so as to leave a mere precipice. The saïs held the head of the horse, who barked his shins continually amongst the stones, and against whose croup the front of the carriage was perpetually thumping ; and my situation in that confounded deal-box, called a talika, was not unlike that of a rat shaken about in a trap. Jolts, to displace a heart the most firmly encased, occurred at each instant, flattening my nose against the carriage-front when I least expected such a gratification ; and, at length, although excessively tired, I was compelled to get out and follow my infernal machine on foot.

Arabas and talikas, filled with women and children, were also “operating” their descent (*dégringolade, detumblement*) from Bougourlou ; and there were shouts of laughter at each new plunge, each unexpected semi-somersault. One whole line of females would be plunged into the laps of those opposite, and even rivals embraced each other involuntarily. Oxen, with heads upraised and bent knees, were doing their utmost to “hold-back” against the inequalities of the road ; and the horses descended, with the prudence of animals who had served a long apprenticeship to bad roads. Horsemen galloped along, as if they were on a level, sure of the footing of their barbs, or horses of Kurdistan. It was a charming pell-mell, cheering to the eye, and truly Turkish in character ; for although only a space of a few minutes separates the Asiatic coast from that of Europe, the local colouring is there much better preserved, and one encounters there far fewer Franks.

The road became a little more practicable, and I climbed again into my vehicle ; regarding, from the window, the coloured houses, the cypresses and turbés which

bordered the road, and sometimes formed an island in the middle of the street, like St. Mary-le-Strand.

I reached the *Bangor* once more. The embarkation of her passengers, did not take place without much noise and laughter. An almost perpendicular plank formed the junction between the boat and the quay. The ascent was very difficult, and it happened to several of the ladies, involuntarily to bestride the plank; an incident which gave rise to a vast number of modest and virtuous cries and scrambles. In this perilous passage, more than one garter of European manufacture showed how far our merchandise has penetrated; and more than one half-exposed limb betrayed its incognito, despite Turkish jealousy. I do not speak of this little incident, however, in the spirit of Paul de Kock, nor for its own sake, but as a trait of manners. The plank was a long one, and by pushing it a few feet farther on to the shore, all this alarm to feminine delicacy might have been avoided; but the idea of *doing* such a thing, entered no man's mind!

Night had fallen when the *Bangor* discharged her living cargo at the landing-place of Galata, after having balanced herself across the water (as before), like a frantic see-saw.

As the "lions" of Constantinople were pretty nearly exhausted for me, I resolved to pass a few days at the Princes' Islands; a miniature Archipelago, scattered upon the Sea of Marmora, at the entrance of the Bosphorus; and which is esteemed a healthful and pleasant residence.

These islands are seven in number, besides one or two islets not counted. The largest is called Prinkipo; and is much frequented. It is reached by steam-boat (Turkish or English) in about an hour and a-half. The Turkish boat, which I had chosen, had a singular mechanism, unlike any other that I have ever seen. The piston, in

rising through the deck, rose and fell like a large saw, wielded by two men sawing "cross-cut."¹ Despite this oddity, the English boat outsped us, and justified her name of *Swan*. Her white prow parted the waters, like the breast of a veritable water-fowl.

The coast of Prinkipo presents itself, as approached from Constantinople, in the form of a high cliff, surmounted by a line of houses. Stairs of wood, or steep winding paths, descend to the beach, bordered by little wooden buildings for bathing. The firing of a gun announces, from the cliff, that the steamer is in sight, and a flotilla of caiques and canoes leave the land, to disembark the passengers; for the shallowness of the water prevents vessels of any draft from approaching the shore.

A lodging had already been secured for me, in the only inn of the island; a wooden house, very fresh and clean, shaded by large trees; and from the windows of which the view extended seaward, until lost in the distance.

In front, was the Isle of Kalki, with its truly Turkish village mirrored in the water, and its one mountain, surmounted by a Greek convent. The water washed the foot of the cliff, upon which my "hotel" was situated; and one could descend in slippers and dressing gown, to take a bath, rendered inviting by a far out-stretching beach of sparkling sand.

¹ What the author describes, is a common form of machinery in many of the "low-pressure" steamers, particularly on the American waters; and many of the Turkish steamers are fitted by American engineers. The piston works in a gigantic black frame, of iron wood, rising above the deck like a monstrous guillotine or gallows; and has a heavy cross-beam on its top, which moves up and down in this frame (like a window in its sash), at every revolution of the engine; and the whole has, certainly, a most sinister appearance, to an unaccustomed eye.—TRANS.

At the *table d'hôte*, which was extremely well served, a majestic lady came to take her place, behind whom stood a superb domestic, in the dress of a Palikari, embroidered with gold and silver, and waited on his mistress with a gravity worthy of an English footman. This fellow, looking more fitted to be loading carbines behind a rock, than to be changing plates, had, certainly, a very strangely misplaced air; and I doubt if any one ever poured wine into a glass in a style so grandiose.

In the evening, the Armenian and Greek women dressed themselves, to promenade the narrow space between the houses and the brink of the cliff. Dresses of rich silk displayed their folds; diamonds sparkled in the moonlight; and bare arms were laden with enormous bracelets of gold, formed of numerous chains, an ornament peculiar to Constantinople, and which our jewellers would do well to imitate, because they give slenderness to the wrist, and set off the hand to great advantage.

The Armenian families are as prolific as those of the English; and it is not at all unusual to see an ample matron preceded by four or five daughters, and as many active boys. The braided hair and the bare necks and shoulders, give to this promenade the aspect of a ball in the open air. Some Parisian bonnets showed themselves, as on the Prado of Madrid; but few in number.

In the cafés, with which all the terraces upon the sea are supplied, are to be had ices, made with the snow of the Olympus of Bithynia; one drinks little cups of coffee accompanied by glasses of water, and smokes tobacco in all imaginable manners; while, in the rear, the transparent curtain of Karagheuz tempts spectators, with the aid of the clash of a tambourine.

Now and then, a blue glare, like that of the electric light, brightens the front of some house, a tuft of

trees, or a group of promenaders, some one of whom turns and smiles. It is a lover, who burns a Bengal light in honour of his mistress, or his affianced. There must be a great many lovers at Prinkipo, for scarcely was one light extinguished, before another shone out. The word "mistress" must be understood in the sense of the old gallantry; for the manners here are very rigid.

Little by little every one returns home, and near midnight all the island is wrapt in virtuous and peaceful slumber. This promenade, and the sea-bathing, form the delights of Prinkipo. To vary them a little, I executed, with an agreeable young man, whose acquaintance I had made at the table d'hôte, a grand excursion on donkeys into the interior of the island. We first passed through the village, the market of which made a fine display of cucumbers, melons, tomatoes, pimento, and grapes; then we followed the sea—sometimes near, sometimes remotely—through plantations of trees and cultivated fields, to the house of a *papa*; a very good liver, who caused us to be served, by a very pretty girl, with raki and glasses of ice-water. Afterward, coasting the island, we arrived at an ancient Greek monastery, sadly dilapidated, and serving at present as an hospital for the insane.

Two or three of these unfortunates, in ragged clothing, with wan complexions and morose air, dragged themselves along with the rattle of irons, in a court blazing with sunlight.¹ The guardians showed us, for a small gratuity, the chapel, containing some wretched images, gilded and with brown faces, such as are made at Mount

¹ The word "sunlight," indicates that this excursion was undertaken next day; but, up to this point, the original text would lead one to believe, that the author set off on this expedition immediately after "all the island" had gone to sleep at "midnight;" and had thus enjoyed a donkey gallop, by moonlight.—TRANS.

Athos, of Byzantine pattern, for the uses of the Greek worship.

The situation of this convent is admirable. It occupies the platform above a mass of rocks, and from its elevated terraces, the eye can enjoy the contemplation of two illimitable depths of azure,—the sky and the sea.

We returned by another road, wilder than our first, among tufts of myrtles, of tamarinds, and of pines, which are indigenous, and which the inhabitants cut for firewood ; and reached the inn, to the great satisfaction of our asses, whom it had been necessary to kick and beat, most unmercifully, to prevent them falling asleep on the road ; for we had committed the grave mistake of not taking the driver with us, although that personage is indispensable in a caravan of that description ; the Oriental donkeys despising exceedingly all “cits” and civilians, and disregarding alike their threats and entreaties.

After the lapse of four or five days, being sufficiently edified by the delights of Prinkipo, I started for an excursion upon the Bosphorus, from Seraglio-point to the entrance of the Black Sea.

XXIX.

THE BOSPHORUS.

THE Bosphorus, from Seraï-Bournou to the entrance of the Black Sea, is furrowed by a perpetual movement of steamers, almost like that upon the Thames. The caidjis, who used to reign as despots over these green and rapid waters, regard the passage of the pyroscaphs, much as the postilions do the locomotives of the railways; and they look upon the invention of Fulton, as utterly diabolical.

There are still, indeed, many obstinate Turks, and cowardly Giaours, who take caiques, to ascend the Bosphorus; just as there are, with us, persons, who, despite the railways on both banks of the Seine, will go to Versailles in boats, or to Saint-Cloud in a hackney-coach, or one-horse "chay." These, however, become, day by day, more rare; and the Mussulmans accommodate themselves very well to the steam-boats.

The "steam-boat" pre-occupies their minds, also, not a little; and there is not a café, or a barber's shop, the walls of which are not adorned with many prints; where the *naïve* artist has done his best, to portray the gorgeous plume of smoke escaping from the funnel of the steamer, and the paddle-wheels beating the water into foam.

I embarked at the bridge of Galata, in the Golden-Horn;—a point of departure for many of the steamers,

which lie there in great numbers, puffing off their white steam, and dark smoke, which form a constant cloud above them, in the clear sky. London Bridge, or Heresford (Hungerford) Suspension Bridge, could not present a scene more animated, or a crowd more tumultuous, than this landing; the arrangements of which are very inconvenient, for, to reach the vessels, one must climb over the bulwarks of the boats, bestride beams, and walk upon decayed or broken planks.

Nor is it easy to extricate the steamer from this crowd of vessels, without repeated contact with one or other of them; but, when once at large, a few strokes of the piston send you floating freely, between a double line of palaces, kiosks, villages, gardens, and hills; upon bright waters, blended of emerald and sapphire, and where the track of the vessel throws out millions of pearls and diamonds, beneath the loveliest sky in the world, and under the rays of a sun, which forms rainbows in the silvery spray of the wheels.

I know nothing comparable to this two hours' voyage, upon this line of azure, drawn as the boundary between two quarters of the world,—between Europe and Asia, both in view at the same time.

The Maiden's Tower soon comes into view, with its clear, white outline, beautifully relieved against the deep hue of the waters;—Scutari and Top-Hané, appear in turn. Above Top-Hané, the Tower of Galata rears its green, conical roof; and on the reverse of the hill, spread the stone mansions of the Europeans, and the coloured wooden-houses of the Turks.

Here and there, some white minaret rears its mast-like spire; tufts of dark green are visible around; the massive structures of the foreign legations, display their fronts; and the great cemetery, shows its screen of cy-

press ; against which, stand relieved the artillery barracks and the military college. Scutari—the Tower of Gold (Chrysopolis)—presents an appearance very similar. The dark trees of the cemetery, there, also, serve as a back-ground for the bright-coloured houses and snow-white mosques. On both sides, Life has Death immediately in its rear ; and each town encircles itself with a suburb of tombs ;—this association, however, as is so constantly remarked, not in the least disturbing the placid fatalism of the Orient.

On the European coast, Schiragan soon comes in sight—a palace, built by the late Mahmoud, in European style, with a classic front, like that of the Chamber of Deputies (in the centre of the gable of which, appears the cypher of the Sultan, in letters of gold), and two wings, supported by Doric columns, of Grecian marble.

I confess that, in the East, I prefer the Arabic or Turkish architecture ; although this large pile of building, the white staircase of which descends to the sea, produces a fine effect. In front of the palace, a splendid caique, with awning of purple, and enriched with gilding and colours, and bearing on the poop a silver bird, awaited the coming of the Sultan.

Opposite, beyond Scutari, extends a long line of summer palaces, shaded by arbutus, ash, and plane trees ; and, despite their closely-trellised windows, recalling rather the pleasure-house than the prison ; and, bathing their feet, as it were, in the water, seem homes of luxury and tranquil ease.

Between Dalma-Baktché and Beschik-Tasch, rises the Venetian front of the new palace, in progress of building, by the Sultan, of which I have already given a particular description. If it be not in the purest architectural taste, it is, at least, a palace worthy of a Kalif, weary

of the regular orders of building, and resolved to make his home in a gigantic *bijou* of marble, wrought in filigree.

Dalma-Baktché was called, in olden time, *Jasonion*; for Jason landed there with his Argonauts, in his expedition in search of the Golden-fleece.

The steamer ran close to the European shore, where the landing-places are frequent; and, in passing Beschik-Tasch, we could see, in the café, the smokers squatting in their trellised stalls, overhanging the water.

We soon left behind, Orta-Kieuï and Kourou-Tchesmé, which border the sea; and beyond which rise, in gentle undulations, hills, decked with trees, with gardens, houses, and villages, of the loveliest aspect. From one village to the other, extends a quay, not interrupted by palaces and summer residences. The Sultana-Validé, the sisters of the Sultan, the Viziers, Ministers, Pashas, and other high personages, have erected there charming habitations, with a perfect idea of the Oriental "comfortable;" which, although not like the English "comfortable," is, nevertheless, what it styles itself.

These palaces are mostly built of wood, with the exception of the columns, which are wrought, ordinarily, out of a single block of marble, of Marmora, or taken from the ruins of some ancient building. But, despite the material of these houses, they are exceedingly elegant, with their projecting roofs, their balconies, and recesses; their kiosks and arbours, their trellised pavilions and terraces, adorned with vases and fountains.

In the middle of the lattices of cedar, which guard the windows of the apartments reserved for the women, are round openings, like those made in the curtain of a theatre, and through which the actors view the spectators. It is by these openings, that, seated upon their carpets or

ottomans, the indolent belles can see passing (without themselves being seen) the vessels, the steam-boats, and the caiques, while they amuse themselves by eating mastic, to enhance the whiteness of their teeth.

A narrow quay of granite, forming a sort of terrace, separates these houses from the sea. In passing them, the voyager feels himself seized, in his own despite, with a vague desire to do like Hassan, the hero of Alfred de Musset; and "throw his cap over the mill" to adopt the fez, and "turn Turk."

Near Arnaout-Keui, the water of the Bosphorus boils like a kettle, by reason of the rapid current. The blue stream rushes, with arrowy swiftness, past the stones of the quay; and there, vigorous as are their embrowned arms, the caidjis feel the oars give in their hands, like the stick of a fan; and if they essay to resist the imperious current, the oars snap like glass. The Bosphorus is full of currents, the direction of which varies greatly, and which give it more the appearance of a river, than of an arm of the sea.

When one reaches the point above described, a cord is thrown to the shore, three or four men pull at it, like horses; and, bending their strong shoulders to the work, haul the boat along, its bow forming a line of white foam in its contact with the swift current.

This rapid passed, the oars are resumed, and the boat glides easily over still water. At foot of the houses, may often be seen groups of three or four Turkish women, seated beside their children; while upon the quay some Greek girls walk, holding each other by the hand, and glancing curiously at the European travellers; men pass on horseback, and figures are not wanting in the landscape.

I remarked, as peculiar, some of the old Armenian houses, painted black—that colour having been formerly

obligatory, the light colours being reserved to the Turks, and the antique, or blood-red, to the Greeks. But now, every one can paint his house what colour he pleases, except *green*—the colour of Islam, of the hadjis, and descendants of the Prophet.

Upon the Asiatic coast, more wooded than that of Europe, the villages, palaces, and kiosks, succeed each other, perhaps, a little less closely; but still very near. There are Kous-Goundjouk, Starros, Beylerbey, Yani-Keui, and, opposite to Babec, “the Sweet-waters of Asia” (Guyuck-Sou).

A charming fountain of white marble, surmounted with crescents, and adorned with sculpture and gilding, is visible from the sea, and indicates to the passenger the locality of this favourite resort of the Osmanlis. An extensive lawn, covered with velvet turf, and studded with spreading beech-trees, planes, and sycamores, is crowded (especially on Fridays) with arabas and talikas; and, upon their Smyrna carpets, lounge the peerless beauties of the harem.

Black eunuchs, switching their white trousers with the whip which is their badge of office, walk among the groups, watching for any furtive glance, or covert sign of intelligence, made by any of their fair wards; and, above all, watching if any accursed Giaour is seeking to penetrate from afar the mystery of the yachmack or feredg . Sometimes, the women fasten shawls to the boughs of trees, and rock their infants in these improvised hammocks; others amuse themselves with comfitures or iced-water; and some, again, smoke narghil s or cigarettes—all chattering, or abusing the Frankish women, who are so brazen as to show their uncovered faces, and walk in the streets among men.

Farther on, some Bulgarian peasants perform their

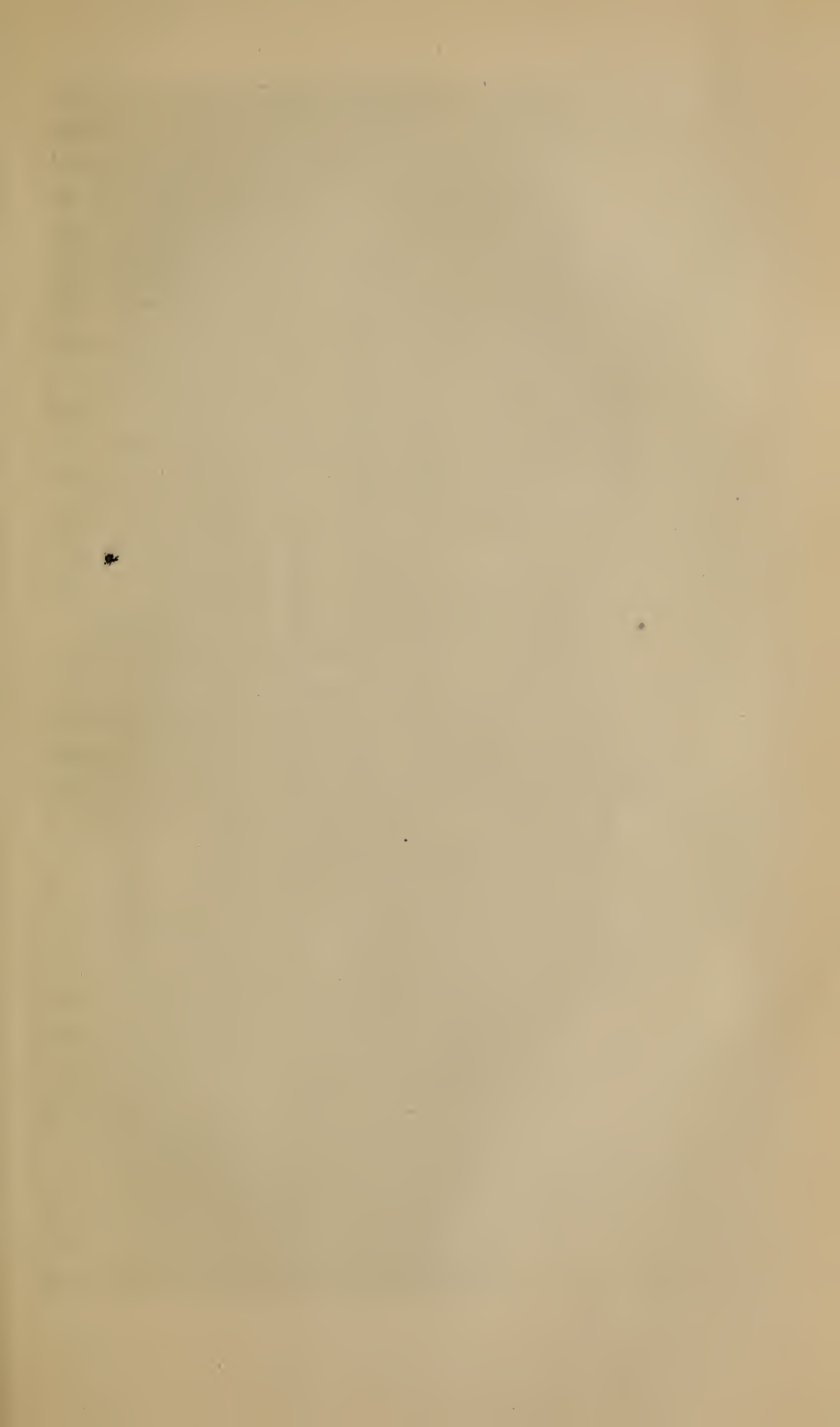
national dances, in hope of a gratuity ; cawadjis prepare their coffee in the open air ; Israelites, with robes divided at the side and turbans spotted with black, offer small wares to the passers-by, with that servile air which belongs to the Eastern Jews, always crushed beneath the fear of extortion ; and caidjis, on the verge of the quay, sit smoking, with legs hanging over the water, while they keep watch upon their boats, with one corner of an eye.

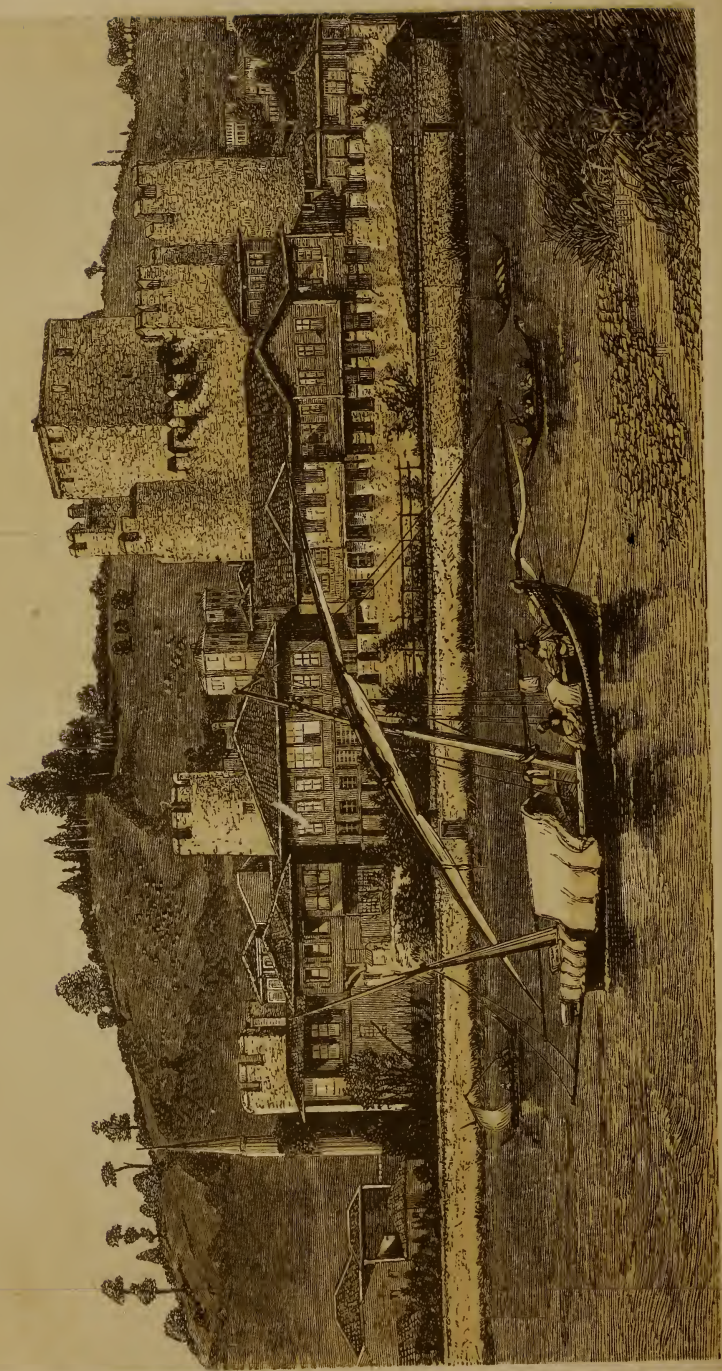
It were too long a task to describe all the villages which follow, and which greatly resemble each other. It is always a line of coloured wooden houses, like those of the Nuremberg toys, stretching along the line of the quay, or plunging their foundations actually into the water ; while the hills, rising in gentle slopes behind, form a soft and harmonious back-ground.

At certain parts of the stream, are placed, upon perches, a sort of hen-coops, of strange construction, in which the fishermen watch the passage of the shoals of fish, and ascertain the proper moment for throwing or drawing their nets. It sometimes happens that they fall asleep upon their perch, and tumble head-foremost into the water, waking, only to be drowned.

And now, the two shores approach each other considerably.

It was here, that Darius caused his army to cross, on their expedition against the Scythians, upon a bridge erected by Mandrocles of Samos. Seven hundred thousand men passed there ; a gigantic assemblage of the hordes of Asia, of exotic types with strange arms, and supplied with a cavalry, blended with elephants and camels. Upon two stone pillars, erected at the bridge-head, were engraved the list of the names of the different nations marching in the train of Darius. These columns rose where now stands the castle of Guzeldjé-Hissar, con-





CASTLE OF ASIA ON THE BOSPHORUS.

structed by Bayezid-Ilderim, "Bajazet the thunderbolt of war."

Mandrocles, according to Herodotus, drew a picture of this passage of the army, which he suspended in the temple of Juno at Samos, his native place, with this inscription: "Mandrocles, having built a bridge upon the fishy Bosphorus, dedicates the picture thereof to Juno. In executing this project of King Darius, Mandrocles acquired glory for the Samiotes, and obtained a crown."

The Bosphorus, at this point, is of about four hundred toises in width; and it is at this same place that have crossed the Persians, the Goths, the Latins, and the Turks. The invaders, whether coming from Europe or Asia, have followed the same path. All these grand out-pourings of nations, have streamed through the same channel, and marched in the track of Darius.

The Castle of Europe—Roumeli-Hissar—named also Bagas-Kesen, or "cut-throat," makes a fine appearance on the slope of the hill, with its white towers and embattled walls. The three large towers, and the small one which is near the sea, form, according to the Turkish character, four letters, M. H. M. D., which make the name of the founder, Mahomet II. This architectural *rebus*, which one would never guess, recalls the plan of the Escorial, which represents the gridiron of Saint-Lawrence, in whose honour the monastery was erected.

The Castle of Europe is directly opposite to the Castle of Asia, which I have already mentioned; the two being the guardians of the narrow channel.

Near Roumeli-Hissar is a cemetery, whose high, dark cypresses and white tombs are mirrored in the blue waters; and which seems a charming spot to select for one's last resting-place.

The steamer, after passing Balta-Liman, Stereh, Yeni-

keuï, and Kalendar, stops at Therapia, a cliff whose name, in the Greek, signifies "healing," and which, by the salubrity of its atmosphere, justifies the appellation. It is there that the English and French ambassadors have their summer residences. In the pretty little bay which it borders, Medea, returning from Colchis with Jason, landed, and unpacked the coffer, enclosing her magical drugs and philtres; and thence, says the legend, and not from its salubrity, the place derived its ancient name of *Pharmaceus*, now transformed into Therapia.

It is a delightful locality. Its quay is bordered by cafés, decorated with a luxury rare in Turkey, inns, pleasure-houses, and gardens.

In the anchorage was moored the *Chaptal*, commanded by M. Poultier, to whom I paid a visit, and who received me with the invariable courtesy common to officers of the navy.

The palace of the French Embassy is a vast Turkish pile of wood, having not the slightest architectural merit; but airy and commodious. Behind, rise terraced gardens, planted with ancient trees of immense height, incessantly shaken by the breezes of the Black Sea. From the highest elevation, the view is magnificent. The coast of Asia spreads before you the shady freshness of the Waters of the Sultana, and in the distance rises the Mountain of the Giant, where tradition places the bed of Hercules. Upon the European shore, Buyuk-Déré displays its graceful curve; and the Bosphorus, beyond Roumeli-Kavak and Anadoli-Kavak, stretches to the Cyanian Isles, and loses itself in the Black Sea.

The white sails pass and repass, or go and come, in the distance, like giant sea-birds; and thought, like the view, loses itself in infinity.

XXX.

BUYUK-DERE.—SWEET-WATERS OF EUROPE.

BUYUK-DERE, seen from the terrace of Therapia, is one of the most charming pleasure villages in the world. The shore curves at this place, and describes a semi-circle, into which the waters pour, to subside in gentle undulations upon the beach. Elegant habitations (among which is discernible the summer palace of the Russian Embassy) rise upon the borders of the sea, at the foot of the hills which form the channel of the Bosphorus. The rich merchants of Constantinople possess there country houses, to which, every night, they are conveyed by steam-boat, to be re-conveyed to their places of business every morning.

Upon the terrace of Buyuk-Deré, after sunset, the Greek and Armenian ladies, superbly dressed, promenade. The lights of the cafés and the houses blend in the water with the silvery wake of the moon and the reflections of the stars. A breeze, laden with perfume and freshness, sighs gently, and waves the air like a fan moved by the invisible hand of Night. Orchestras of Hungarian musicians give to the echoes the waltzes of Strauss ; and the bulbul sings the poem of his loves with the rose, hidden beneath the tufts of the myrtles.

After a day of heat, the frame, re-animated by this balmy air, feels a delicious sense of being ; and it is with regret, that one retires to rest.

The hotel recently opened at Buyuk-Deré (and rendered

necessary by the number of visitors), is well kept. It has a large garden, in which the branches of a superb plane-tree expand themselves, among the boughs of which is established a little bower, wherein I took my breakfast, shaded by a parasol of leaves. As I was admiring the size of this tree, I was told, that, in a plain at the end of the chief street of the village, was another, much more enormous, and known as "the plane-tree of Godfrey de Bouillon."

I went to see it, and at first glance, I seemed to behold rather a forest than a tree. The trunk, composed of an agglomeration of seven or eight stems, resembles a tower, dilapidated in parts; enormous roots, like giant serpents half hidden in the ground, creep upon the soil; and the boughs have more the air of horizontal trees, than of mere branches. In its sides gape black caverns formed by decay, in which the herdsmen sit, as in a grotto, and make fires there, without disturbing the giant tree more than do the insects that crawl upon its bark. It is majestically picturesque, with its monstrous masses of foliage, over which centuries have glided like drops of rain; and which have seen outspread beneath their shade, the tents of heroes sung by Tasso, in his "Jerusalem Delivered."

But do not let us abandon ourselves to poetry. See, here, the history, which comes, as usual, to contradict the tradition.

The learned declare that Godfrey de Bouillon never encamped beneath this tree, and they bring, for proof, a passage from Anna Commenus, a contemporary of the facts, which certainly destroys the legend. But, nevertheless, Count Raoul established *his* camp at Buyuk-Deré, with other Latin Crusaders; and the people subsequently gave to the tree the name of Godfrey de Bouillon, which, in their minds, was specially identified with the whole crusade.

Be this as it may, the millennial tree is ever there, full of nests and of sunbeams, seeing the years fall at its feet like leaves ; itself, from century to century, more firm and more colossal ; while the winds of the desert have long since scattered, among the sands, the impalpable ashes of the Crusaders.

The *Charlemagne* was moored at Therapia, in front of the French Embassy ; and on this night the Ambassador gave an entertainment to the crew, composed of some twelve hundred men. The sailors had arranged a theatrical performance in the gardens of the Embassy, which they enacted with surpassing skill, to the great amusement of their fellow-sailors, and a numerous audience of Europeans, either residents or belonging to the other Legations.

The weather was lovely ; and, after the entertainment, I resolved to return, that very night, to Constantinople, in a caique with two pairs of oars, manned by two robust Arnaouts. Although it was ten o'clock when I started, I could see perfectly, and in faith better than in London at mid-day. It was not a night, but a softened day, of inconceivable purity and transparency. I established myself in the stern of my caique, with my paletot buttoned to the throat,—for the dew fell in fine silvery drops, like the nocturnal tears of the stars, and the bottom of the boat was quite damp.

My Arnaouts had thrown jackets over their striped shirts, and we commenced the descent of the stream. The caique, aided by the current and impelled by four vigorous arms, flew along almost as rapidly as a steamer, amid the luminous trembling of the water. The hills and capes of the shore threw large shadows across the silvery surface of the waves ; lights burned here and there, on board ships at anchor, or in the distant windows of the villages. No noise

was heard, but the measured breathing of the caidjis, the rythmical movement of the oars, the ripple of the water, and an occasional distant barking of some awakened dog.

From time to time, a meteor would shoot across the heavens, and die away like a rocket. The milky way unrolled its zone of white, with a brightness and definiteness of outline unknown in the misty nights of the North; the stars shone, even in the wake of the moon. It was a marvel of tranquil magnificence, and serene splendour.

In contemplating this vault of lapis-lazuli, I could not but ask, "Why is the sky so splendid, when the world is asleep; and why do the stars not rise, but at the hour when all eyes are closed?" This fairy-like illumination is seen by no one. It is displayed only for the nyctalopic eyes of owls, bats, and cats. Does the Divine Decorator despise the world, that He does not display His most magnificent pictures until the spectators have retired? This is not flattering to human pride; but then the earth is only a speck, a grain of seed, lost in the immensity of space; and, as Victor Hugo says, "the normal state of the sky is night."

One o'clock had struck, when my boat grazed the landing at Top-Hané. I lighted my *canterio*, and climbed the deserted streets, until I gained my apartment, in the Great Field of Pera,—exhausted but delighted.

The next day, I visited "The Sweet-waters of Europe," at the extremity of the Golden-Horn. Passing the thin bridges of boats (the last of which has been lately built by a wealthy Armenian, at his own charge), I cleared the docks of the naval arsenal,—where, upon stocks, hung suspended carcasses of ships, like skeletons of mammoths or whales, and, going between Eyoub and Pein-Pasha, I soon entered

the archipelago of low islands which divide the embouchure of the Cydaris and Barbyses, united a little before they fall into the sea.

Some herons and swans, their beaks upon their wings, and one foot held up against their breasts, looked at us with a friendly air as we passed; gulls flapped our faces with their wings, and hawks described circles above our heads. As we advance, the murmur of Constantinople dies away, and solitude begins: the country succeeds to the town by an insensible transition.

The Sweet-waters of Europe are more especially frequented during the winter. The Sultan has a kiosk there, with artificial waters and cascades, bordered by charming pavilions, in Turkish style. This residence was built by Mahmoud; but as it is scarcely ever inhabited, and not kept in repair, it has suffered greatly from neglect, and is almost in ruins.

The canal overflows, and the disjointed stones allow the water to escape, while parasitical plants blend with the arabesques of the walls. It is said that Mahmoud, having built this charming nest for a favourite odalisque, refused again to visit it, after an early death had taken her from him. Since that time, a veil of melancholy appears to hang over this deserted palace, buried in masses of sycamores, beeches, and plane-trees, which almost hide it from the eye of the traveller, like the thick forest that surrounds the chateau of the Sleeping Beauty of the Wood; and the weeping-willows drop sadly into the water their tears of foliage.

On that particular day, there was no visitor but myself, and after wandering for a time beneath the trees, I paused at a little café to take some *youarth* (milk-curd) and a morsel of bread—a frugal repast, of which I stood in great need.

In place of returning in my caique, I took a horse, and retraced my way by Pein-Pasha, Haas-Keuï, and Kassim-Pasha, towards San-Demetri, the Greek village near the Great Cemetery of Pera ; and, following vast naked fields, I arrived at Ock-Meidani, which one would take, at a distance, for a cemetery, so thickly is it studded with a multitude of small columns of marble.

It is, however, merely the place where the Sultans used to practise throwing the djerid ; and these little monuments are to mark the spots of extraordinarily successful casts. They are very simple, and have for ornament only an inscription, or sometimes only a star of brass, on the summit.

The djerid is fallen into disuse, and the most modern of these columns are already old. The old customs disappear, and will soon be only remembrances.

Seventy-two days have elapsed since I reached Constantinople, and I know its every street and corner. Doubtless, this is a very short time in which to study the character and manners of a nation, but it is enough to seize the picturesque physiognomy of a city ; and that was the sole object of my visit.

Life is walled-in in the East ; religious prejudices and old habits oppose all attempts to penetrate its mysteries ; the language is unacquirable, except by a study of seven or eight years ; and one is forced to be contented with a view of the external panorama. A few weeks' prolongation of my sojourn, would have gained me no advantage ; and, besides this, I began to have a longing once more for pictures, statues, and works of art. The everlasting *bal masqué* of the streets had begun to weary me. I had seen enough of veils ; I wished to see a few faces.

This mystery, which at first occupies the imagination,

becomes fatiguing at length, particularly when one finds that the veil is really impenetrable. You soon cease to think of it, and throw only absent glances upon the phantoms which glide past you. Ennui gains upon you, despite the Frankish society of Pera ; which, although composed of most worthy people, is not altogether amusing, particularly for a poet.

I therefore secured a cabin on board the Austrian vessel the *Imperatore*, to go to Athens (by correspondence with Syra), visit Corinth, the Gulf of Lepanto, Patros, Corfu, the Mountain of the Chimera, and reach Trieste by coasting the shores of the Adriatic.

• I see already, in imagination, shining upon the rock of the Acropolis, the white colonnade of the Parthenon, with its interstices of azure ; and the minarets of Saint-Sophia give me no more pleasure. My spirit, turned towards another goal, was no longer impressed by the surrounding objects.

I departed ; and yet, although glad to depart, I took one last look at Constantinople, disappearing on the verge of the horizon, with that indefinable feeling of regret which presses upon the heart, when one quits a spot which he may probably never more behold.

NOTE.

THE following description of an "Eastern bath," forms so admirable a corollary to the brief account given by the Author, (pp. 241-244), that I am tempted to append it.

It is from a translation of M. Alexander Dumas' admirable "*Travels in Egypt and Arabia Petræa*," never published in this country, but charmingly rendered, some years since, by a highly accomplished American lady.—TRANS.

"The next morning I presented myself at the baths, the moment they were opened. After the mosque, the bath is the finest embellishment of Oriental cities. The one to which I was conducted, is a vast edifice of simple architecture, and neatly ornamented. At the entrance is a large vestibule, having rooms on the right and left for the reception of cloaks, and, in the rear, a door hermetically closed. Through this door you pass into a room warmer than the surrounding atmosphere, and from this (as I afterwards learned) you may retreat, if you choose; but put your foot in one of the adjoining closets, and you are no longer your own master. Two attendants seize you, and, for the time, you are the property of the establishment. Much to my surprise, this was my predicament. I had scarcely entered a closet, when two strong men, belonging to the bath, laid hold of me; and, in an instant, I was stripped to the skin.

"One of them then passed a linen shawl around my waist, while the other buckled on my feet a gigantic pair of clogs, which at once made me a foot taller. This mode of shoeing not only rendered flight impossible, but, by its clumsy elevation, destroyed my equilibrium; and I should inevitably have fallen, had not the two men supported me on either side. I was fairly caught. I could not retreat, and therefore suffered them to lead me whither they would.

"We passed into another room. Here, whatever might be

my resignation, the vapour and heat stifled me. I thought that my guides had mistaken the way, and tumbled me into an oven. I tried to shake them off,—but my resistance was anticipated. Besides, I was in no condition for a trial of strength, and was obliged to confess myself vanquished.

“In a few moments, I was astonished at perceiving that, as the perspiration poured from me, my lungs began to dilate, and my respiration returned. In this state, I passed through five or six room; the heat of which increased so rapidly, that I began to believe man had, for five thousand years, mistaken his proper element, and that his appropriate destiny was boiling or roasting. At last we came to the furnace. Here, the fog was so dense, that I could not see two steps before me; and the heat so entirely insupportable, that I partly fainted.

“I shut my eyes, and resigned myself to my guides in utter helplessness. After leading, or rather carrying, me a few steps further, they took off my girdle, unhooked my clogs, and extended me, half swooning, on something like a marble table, in the middle of the apartment.

“Here, again, I soon became accustomed to the infernal atmosphere. I prudently took advantage of the gradual return of my faculties, and looked about me.

“With my other senses, my sight revived; and, despite the fog, I made out, with tolerable accuracy, the surrounding objects.

“My tormentors seemed to have forgotten me for a moment: they were busy at one side of the room. I lay in the centre of of a large square saloon, incrustated to the height of five or six feet with variously-coloured marbles. A series of spouts threw out, incessantly, streams of smoking water, which, falling upon the pavement beneath, glided thence into four basins, like cauldrons, at the four corners of the room. On the surface of the water in these basins, was an indefinite number of bald heads, bobbing about, and expressing, by the most grotesque contortions of face, various degrees of felicity.

“This spectacle so occupied my attention, that I scarcely heeded the return of my masters.

"They came, however; one with a large wooden bowl of soap-suds, the other with a ball of fine hemp.

"Suddenly, one of the rascals inundated my face and neck with his suds; and the other, seizing me by the shoulder, rubbed, most furiously, my face and breast with his hemp.

"This treatment, and the pain induced by it, were so perfectly intolerable, that all my powers of resistance and resentment waked at once. I bolted upright, kicked my hempen friend half across the room, and planted my fist in the face of soap-suds, with such good will, that he lay sprawling on the floor. Then, knowing of no other remedy for the soap (which was blistering my skin), I drew a straight line for the basin that seemed the most inhabited, and boldly plunged in.

"I had misjudged. The remedy was worse than the disease. Before, my face and neck were cauterised; now, my whole body was scalded: the water was boiling! I yelled with pain; I sprang on and over my neighbours, who could not comprehend my case; and got out of the tub almost as rapidly as I got in. However, I was not rapid enough to escape the effect of my immersion; my body was as red as a lobster! I was stupified! I must be dreaming, or riding a night-mare; yet there was no deception. Here, under my very eyes, were men stewing in a bath of which I had *tried* the temperature, who evidently took great delight in the operation. What *could* it mean? My notions of pleasure and pain had become confused. They could enjoy what to me was agony! I once more resolved to resign myself to fate. I doubted my own judgment. I distrusted my own senses. I determined again to submit to my tormentors.

"They came, having recovered from my assault. I followed them without resistance to another basin. They made signs to me to descend the steps. I obeyed, and found myself in water of about 100° Fahrenheit. This seemed to me temperate. From this I passed to another of a higher temperature, but still supportable. I remained in it, as in the first, about three minutes. I then proceeded to the fourth, where I commenced my hellish apprenticeship. I approached it with

the greatest repugnance, but I had made up my mind to go through with my desperate adventure. I first dipped my toes in the water; it was hot; certainly, but not so scalding a before. I gradually immersed my whole body, and was surprised to find it endurable. In a few seconds, I thought no more of it,—though, I am confident, the heat of the water must have reached 140° or 150° . When I emerged, my skin had changed from the lobster scarlet to a deep crimson.

“My attendants now again took me in hand. They replaced the linen round my waist, bound a shawl on my head, and led me back through the rooms by which I had entered (taking care to add to my covering at each change of atmosphere), until I arrived at the chamber where I was so uncereemoniously stripped. Here I found a good carpet and pillow. My turban and girdle were taken off, I was enveloped in a large woollen gown, laid down like an infant, and left alone.

“I had now an indefinable feeling of comfort. I was perfectly happy; yet so exhausted that when the door was opened, half an hour after, I had not changed my position by the movement of a finger or a muscle.

“The new comer was a heavy and well-set Arab. He approached my couch as if he had some business with me.

“I looked on him with a sort of dread, very natural to a man who had passed such an ordeal as I have described; but I was too weak to attempt to rise. He took my left hand, cracked all its joints, and did the same to the right. After my hands, he administered upon my feet and knees; and, to finish the matter, he dexterously threw me into the position of a gudgeon to be broiled; and gave me the ‘*coup de grace*,’ by cracking the vertebræ of my spine! I screamed with terror; thinking my backbone was broken, to a certainty. My *masseur* then kneaded my arms, legs, and thighs, for a quarter of an hour, and left me. I was weaker than ever; my joints all pained me, and I had not strength sufficient to cover myself with the carpet. A servant now brought me coffee, pastilles, and a pipe, and left me to intoxicate myself with perfume and tobacco. I passed half an hour in a drowsy state, lost in the

vagaries of a delicious inebriation, experiencing a feeling of happiness before unknown, and entertaining a supreme indifference to every (absent) earthly thing. I was awakened from this by a barber, who shaved me, and combed my whiskers and moustache. Next, my Arab returned, to whom I made signs that I wished to depart. He brought me my clothes, assisted me in my toilette, and led me to the chamber opening on the vestibule, where I found my cloak. The cost of this entertainment, which lasted three hours, was a piastre and a half, or about fivepence English."

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